“HAPP’LY-EVER-AFTERING”: CHANGING SOCIAL AND INDUSTRY CONVENTIONS IN HOLLYWOOD MUSICAL ADAPTATIONS, 1960-75

BY

MEGAN BOLANDER WOLLER

DISSERTATION

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Doctoral Committee:

Associate Professor Gayle Sherwood Magee, Chair
Professor Jeffrey Magee
Associate Professor Christina Bashford
Associate Professor Anustup Basu

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores seven Hollywood adaptations of Broadway musicals from the 1960s and early seventies. Though generally considered beyond the "Golden Age" of film, this period produced some of the most enduring and well-loved film musicals of any decade. Furthermore, they can all be seen as products of their time. The 1960s were a highly volatile time in American history as well as within the film industry. Socio-cultural and political factors, such as the Cold War, feminism, the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, the sexual revolution, and the gay rights movement, all impacted American society and popular culture. Furthermore, the studio system continued to break down and with it the Hollywood Production Code. Towards the end of the decade, the so-called New Hollywood filmmakers introduced new ways of American filmmaking.

Through seven case studies – *West Side Story* (1961), *The Music Man* (1962), *Bye Bye Birdie* (1963), *The Sound of Music* (1965), *Camelot* (1967), *Paint Your Wagon* (1969), and *Cabaret* (1972) – I place film adaptations of musicals in their socio-political and film industry situation by analyzing the changes made in the translation from stage to screen, delving into the possible reasons for the alterations. In every chapter, I discuss the approach to fidelity and use of cinematic techniques. Each of the chapters then focus on different issues: gender and ethnicity in *West Side Story*, regionalism and politics in *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie*, politics, feminism, and the folk revival in *The Sound of Music*, New Hollywood and the sexual revolution in *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon*, and discussion of *Cabaret* as an experimental, adult musical that can be seen as the culmination of the decade. An in-depth study of the musicals from the 1960s and early seventies provides a reassessment of the genre during this period as dynamic and very much in tune with the myriad changes.

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INTRODUCTION

While scholars tend to view the 1960s and later as beyond the "Golden Age" of film musicals, the decade produced a number of highly successful and socially relevant musical adaptations. From 1960 to the early 70s, no less than thirty-nine film musical adaptations were released. These film adaptations took Broadway, off-Broadway, and West End musicals as their sources. In this dissertation, I consider adaptations of Broadway musicals through seven case studies – *West Side Story* (1961), *The Music Man* (1962), *Bye Bye Birdie* (1963), *The Sound of Music* (1965), *Camelot* (1967), *Paint Your Wagon* (1969), and *Cabaret* (1972) – and investigate how film musicals embody the time period of their production and initial release in myriad ways.

The end of the Hollywood Production Code is a key process and event that can be seen to define my chosen decade, both symbolically and in actual practice. The Code itself privileged those films that espouse family values and repressed any aspects deemed unsavory. The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA) instituted the Production Code nicknamed the Hays Code for MPPDA President William H. Hays in 1930.[1] The Code restricted the depiction of drug use, sex, and vulgar language on film.[2] However, the MPPDA did not really put the Code into effect until four years after it was written. Pre-Code films, including musicals, allowed for a certain freedom in the depiction of violence and sexuality. This atmosphere allowed for more sexual freedom in musicals upon which a number of musical stars, such as Maurice Chevalier, based their early careers. In *Love Me Tonight* (1932) for instance,

[1]See Thomas Doherty, *Hollywood's Censor: Joseph I. Breen and The Production Code Administration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007) for a detailed discussion of the Code Administration and its effects.

[2]A version of the Code can be found in John Belton, ed., *Movies and Mass Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 135-52.

Chevalier sings that "passion's in my breast" and he would "like to have a little son of a Mimi bye and bye" to Princess Jeannette, whom he has just met.[3]

The Hollywood Production Code began to impact the content of films towards the mid-1930s. Pressure from religious groups, specifically Catholic Church leaders, caused the Administration to enforce the Hays Code in 1934. Films made during this transitional period tend to feature a hybrid of bawdy humor and new toned-down allusions. Throughout the remainder of the thirties and forties, the head of the Production Code Administration, Joseph Breen, dictated what could and could not appear on film. In the 1950s, the Code Administration revised the restrictions in an effort to maintain some semblance of authority in the film industry, however. The Production Code still had some impact on the language and how sexual references could be made. By 1960, the Code began to lose hold, and was officially replaced by the MPAA ratings system in 1968.[4] I argue that due to the effects of the end of the Code two trends emerged in film musicals: an adherence to Code ideals and an exploration of previously non-sanctioned themes and depictions.

Film Musicals and Selection Process

As musicals helped to define the film studios, it comes as no surprise that they also began to wane alongside classical Hollywood in the fifties and sixties. Yet a detailed study of the period reveals that the reality was much more complicated. Despite the decline in production, the musical remained a vibrant genre that continued to interface with societal issues and often resonate with audiences. Some of the factors that I explore in connection with the changing face of the film musical adaptation include changing demographics, the rise of television, the precepts

[3]Samuel Hoffenstein, Waldemar Young, and George Marion Jr., *Love Me Tonight.* DVD. Directed by Rouben Mamoulian (New York: Kino Video, 2003).

[4]Mark Wheeler, *Hollywood Politics and Society* (London: BFI Publishing, 2006), 63-4.

of New Hollywood cinema, and the increasing cultural importance of rock and pop music. As these factors became more prominent, the institution of Broadway no longer held the cultural sway it once had. And yet, incredibly successful Broadway adaptations, such as *West Side Story* (1961), *My Fair Lady* (1964), and *The Sound of Music* (1965) suggested for a time that the Hollywood musical was still thriving. These adaptations brought existing musicals to wider audiences. More importantly, they interacted with Broadway conventions, industry upheaval, and the socio-cultural moment in meaningful ways.

Of course, the concept of genre and generic conventions experiences a crisis throughout the decade of the sixties and into the seventies. Scholars, such as Rick Altman and Jane Feuer, have long grappled with the concept of musical as genre in an attempt to understand its formulas and characteristics.[5] During the studio era, plot, character, and song conventions all come together to create a largely recognizable genre. Later films, however, often blur genre lines and even directly challenge the traditional form of the musical. Music certainly permeates and plays a central role in films such as *The Graduate* (1967) and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). The innovation of Robert Altman's *Nashville* (1975), which contains a large amount of songs central to the film's narrative, has long been considered a "timely reinvention – or deconstruction – of the studio era musical."[6] Yet as Gayle Magee's reevaluation demonstrates, *Nashville* actually has much in common with the professionalism of the typical studio era musical. Nevertheless, a discourse of authenticity as well as changing ideas or possibilities for the development of the musical begin to take hold during this time period. While the musicals considered here may

[5]See literature review below for a more detailed discussion of Altman's and Feuer's foundational works.

[6]Gayle Magee, "Songwriting, Advertising, and Mythmaking in the New Hollywood: the Case of *Nashville* (1975)," 5:3 (Fall 2012), 29.

challenge genre conventions in various ways, they all have stage antecedents and thus their relationship with the Broadway musical is central to how they fit into the musical as a genre.

During the height of the studio era in the 1930s and forties, Hollywood studios made hundreds of musicals.[7] Audiences flocked to see performers, such as Al Jolson, not only talk but sing and dance in the new sound films. The novelty of not simply talking films but singing and dancing spectacles appealed to American audiences across the country. Musicals even helped save the major studios from bankruptcy during the Great Depression. Busby Berkeley's musicals at Warner Bros. offered escapism through spectacle and fantasy while simultaneously addressing the economic crisis. Studios cultivated singing and dancing stars, such as Jeannette MacDonald, Fred Astaire, Eleanor Powell, and Judy Garland. Throughout this period, the major studios churned out anywhere from twenty to forty musicals every year. This number began to decrease in the 1950s; by 1959, only eleven musicals were released. This trend of decline in the production of film musicals continued into the 1960s as the studio system broke down. However, studios continued to make successful musicals throughout the earlier decade, including *Singin' in the Rain* (1952), *Gigi* (1958), and several adaptations of Rodgers and Hammerstein shows such as *Oklahoma!* (1955). Hollywood adaptations abounded, and the ways in which filmmakers altered their original sources reflected the differing conventions between Hollywood film and the Broadway stage. This tendency remained true throughout the period that witnessed the presumed death of the film musical.

Of course, adaptations of Broadway musicals were not the only types of film musicals produced during the 1960s and seventies. Other types of musicals from Hollywood and beyond

[7]Edwin Bradley includes 171 films in his study on musicals during the first years of sound film, *The First Hollywood Musicals: A Critical Filmography of 171 Features, 1927 through 1932* (Jefferson, NC: MacFarland & Company, 1996). After the initial boom, production of musicals dropped slightly. The genre remained popular, however, and benefited from the Fordist principles of the studio system.

permeated the American film scene. In the 1960s, several genres of film musicals were aimed at the emerging teen culture. The beach party movies featuring Annette Funicello and Frankie Avalon, such as *Beach Party* (1963) and *Beach Blanket Bingo* (1965), gained a popular following and had a number of imitators. Furthermore, Elvis Presley, who began starring in movies in the fifties, continued to appear musical films in the sixties, including *Blue Hawaii* (1961), *Girls! Girls! Girls!* (1962), and *Viva Las Vegas* (1964). The Beatles' *A Hard Day's Night* (1964) and *Yellow Submarine* (1968) presented another approach to films with popular music. All of these films contained rock or pop music and therefore catered to the younger generation. Aimed at a family audience, Disney's *Mary Poppins* (1964) garnered both critical and popular acclaim. The film starred Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke and featured songs by Richard and Robert Sherman. The success of the film spawned a trend of child-friendly musicals in the later sixties and into the seventies, including *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (1968) and *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* (1971), both of which also contain songs by the Sherman brothers.

While my dissertation deals with Hollywood adaptations of Broadway musicals, other sub-types form an important part of the overall picture. Major Hollywood adaptations of Broadway musicals make up the majority of the musical adaptations in this period with twenty-six films released from 1960-75. Hollywood movie musicals also demonstrate a specifically American phenomenon and have the potential for widespread popularity. These films include critical and commercial successes, such as *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music*, as well as relative failures such as *Camelot* (1967). While Hollywood mostly adapted recent stage productions, studios also filmed the older genres of operetta and musical comedy. For example, MGM produced *The Great Waltz* with music by Johann Strauss, Jr. (stage 1934; film 1972) and *Jumbo* by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart (stage 1935; film 1962). Hollywood studios also

produced musicals based on British shows: Universal Pictures' *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1973) and 20th Century Fox's *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975), for example. Non-Hollywood films like the British production of *Oliver!* (1968) and the Italian *Man of La Mancha* (1972) make up a small but important contingent of musical adaptations.

I explore approaches to the film musical and adaptation based on my viewing of all film musical adaptations from 1960 through 1975. Although my main case studies begin in 1961 with *West Side Story* and end in 1973 with *Cabaret*, I regard the "period designation" 1960-75 as an appropriate marker for the various trends and generic development that I have observed. In 1960, two adaptations of Broadway musicals were released, *Bells Are Ringing* and *Can-Can*. Directed by Vincente Minelli and starring Judy Holliday and Dean Martin, *Bells Are Ringing* centers on a woman in the workplace. *Can-Can*, starring Frank Sinatra, Maurice Chevalier, Shirley Maclaine, and Louis Jourdan, similarly encounters a working woman. Both films, while skirting around progressive issues, have standard romantic-comedy plots and end with implications of marriage and the assumption of traditional gender roles. In 1975, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* was released, flouting convention and solidifying the end of the Old Guard. My chosen case studies – *West Side Story*, *The Music Man*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *The Sound of Music*, *Camelot*, *Paint Your Wagon*, and *Cabaret* – highlight prominent tendencies of musical filmmaking from 1960-75. Of course, choices must be made. Therefore, my dissertation omits such key events as Barbra Streisand's film musical career, a fascinating subject in its own right. I have selected film musicals that were critically acclaimed, commercially successful, have become enduring classics, or conversely failed in any or all of the above ways. I contend that the changes made from the stage versions of these musicals can tell us about the evolution of the film musical as a genre and the times in which they were made.

As mentioned above, I see film musicals as largely fitting into two basic trends in an attempt to either maintain a traditional approach to the genre or pursue new directions. While both tendencies appear from 1960 through 1975, the latter become more prevalent later in this period. Many such musicals are distinctly family oriented, including *The Music Man* (1962), *My Fair Lady*, and *The Sound of Music*. The films *Can-Can* (1960) and *Funny Girl* (1968) address more adult topics, but handle sex with care. Others, such as *Paint Your Wagon* (1969), *Cabaret* (1972), and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975) exploit the new sense of freedom brought on by the dissolution of the Code. Explorations of subject matter pertaining to race and ethnicity also appear in musical adaptations. For example, *West Side Story* deals with ethnic tensions – albeit in a problematic manner caused in part by the use of white American actors to play Puerto Rican characters. Many adaptations may also connect with musicals written specifically for the cinematic medium. For instance, *Bye Bye Birdie* (1963) parodies Elvis, his popularity with teenage girls, and his films.

Literature Review and Methodology

My own work on film adaptations of stage musicals is situated among relevant literature from varying fields. While a broader focus on film adaptations of stage musicals, particularly from the period of 1960-1975, remains lacking, scholarly works on musical theater and film nonetheless inform this area. Sources in musical theater provide a particularly helpful background regarding many of the musicals that were adapted for film in the sixties and seventies. Thus, I turn to survey works that encompass several stage musicals and book-length works on individual composers or shows. My dissertation goes beyond much of the previous scholarly work focused on film musicals, concentrating on the more neglected area of adaptations from this period. Nevertheless, existing literature on the cinema, film music, musical

theater, and film musicals specifically offers much. Furthermore, studies on adaptation also provide a framework for my own analysis of individual musicals and their impact.

Adaptation Theory

Adaptation studies and theory provide a rich backdrop for any study that involves an artistic work based on another. Many authors begin their approach to adaptation studies by asking the question: what is adaptation? Mireia Aragay and Gemma López identify adaptation as

> a prime instance of cultural recycling, a process, which radically undermines any linear, diachronic understanding of cultural history, proposing instead a synergic, synchronic view of the mutual inf(l)ection between 'source' and adaptation(s).[8]

This view considers the highly intertextual nature of adaptation and favors a holistic approach over one that privileges chronology and therefore fidelity. The definitions of Julie Sanders and Linda Hutcheon have the most resonance for my own work. Sanders identifies adaptation as often including "a transpositional practice, casting a specific genre into another generic mode [e.g. novel to film; play to musical]… indulging in the exercise of trimming and pruning; yet it can also be […] engaged in addition, expansion, accretion, and interpolation."[9] Similarly, Hutcheon defines a particular method of adaptation, which she terms "translation" that requires "recoding [the work] into a new set of conventions as well as signs."[10] Taken together, these ideas of adaptation underpin my analysis. Fidelity to the source has been a central subject of inquiry within adaptation studies. Authors such as Thomas Leitch devise a taxonomic system for the various types of adaptation based on levels of fidelity.[11] Adaptation theory draws heavily on

[8]Mireia Aragay and Gemma López, "Inf(l)ecting *Pride and Prejudice*: Dialogism, Intertextuality and Adaptation" in *Books in Motion: Adaptation, Intertextuality, Authorship*, ed. Mireia Aragay (New York: Rodopi, 2006), 201.

[9]Julie Sanders, *Adaptation and Appropriation* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 18.

[10]Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 16.

[11]Thomas Leitch, *Adaptation and Its Discontents: From Gone with the Wind to Passion of the Christ* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 93-126.

the notion of intertextuality as theorized by Julia Kristeva. In her essay, Kristeva engages with Mikhail Bakhtin's discussion of dialogism, particularly the concept that "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another."[12] In adaptation theory, intertextuality becomes a way to break away from value judgments and classifications based on fidelity.

When dealing with adaptations of any kind, the concept of fidelity becomes key. Despite the many differences between the stage versions and films, authors such as Ethan Mordden have lauded *West Side Story*, and even more so, *My Fair Lady*, as remarkably faithful film adaptations.[13] These examples additionally illustrate the propensity for scholars to assign value based on fidelity. However, it is necessary to consider film adaptations on their own terms, exploring the reason filmmakers make changes. I study the markers of adaptation in order to shed light on key changes that reflect differing conventions and social implications. I find it essential to look at not only how film musical adaptations change the source show, but also why they must. Since Hollywood movie musicals draw from theatrical productions, they use Broadway conventions by extension. However, they simultaneously strive to transform the original productions into cinematic entities, and as such, film musicals warrant further study that examines aspects of adaptation while considering them as autonomous works. Therefore, adaptation theory provides a useful framework in its focus on issues of fidelity and other concepts relevant to this study.

Musical Theater

[12]Julia Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," in *The Kristeva Readers*, ed. Toril Moi (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 37.

[13]Ethan Mordden, *The Hollywood Musical* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981). He claims that the filmmakers "intended to film the stage show with utmost fidelity," 205.

Musical theater continues to grow as a field, providing a wealth of scholarship with which to engage. Within this corpus, the most useful scholarship for this project deals with musicals from a historical or social perspective. In their seminal books, Joseph Swain (*The Broadway Musical: A Critical and Musical Survey*) and Geoffrey Block (*Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from* Showboat *to Sondheim and Lloyd Webber*) both devote chapters to individual shows, including *West Side Story*.[14] The authors' combination of genesis, relevant criticism, plot explication, and musical analysis provides an excellent foundation for my work on *West Side Story*. In particular, Block's analysis of adaptation from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* to *West Side Story* provides a useful account of the impact of various types of adaptation.

Another approach is a more strictly historical view. As many of my case studies (e.g. *West Side Story*, *The Music Man*, and *The Sound of Music*) are major examples of the genre, histories, including *Coming Up Roses: The Broadway Musical in the 1950s* and *Open a New Window: The Broadway Musical in the 1960s* by Ethan Mordden and *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* by Larry Stempel, often give the shows ample discussion.[15] These works present helpful information concerning the creation and production of the stage versions of the musicals under my purview. Mark Grant's *The Rise and Fall of the Broadway Musical* and Denny Martin Flinn's *Musical! A Grand Tour: The Rise, Glory, and Fall of an American Institution*, as their titles suggest, take on a perspective that privileges the so-called Golden Age of Broadway. Grant explicitly argues that the musical "coalesced and integrated the complementary theatrical arts – playwriting, music, design, dance, movement, truthful acting" in

[14]Joseph Swain, *The Broadway Musical: A Critical and Musical Survey* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2002) and Geoffrey Block, *Enchanted Evenings:The Broadway Musical from* Showboat *to Sondheim*, 2nd Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[15]Geoffrey Block has identified *West Side Story* as part of the "canonic twelve" in "The Broadway Canon from Show Boat to West Side Story and the European Operatic Ideal" in *The Journal of Musicology* 11, no. 4 (Autumn, 1993): 525-544.

its "Golden Age," 1927-66.[16] In this estimation, many of the musicals that I consider fall just past the genre's "prime."

As Grant suggests, the notion of integration forms an important part of the discourse on American musical theater. Swain's approach assumes integration to a degree in that musical numbers serve a sophisticated dramatic function.[17] Similarly, the rise and fall trajectory adopted by Grant and Flinn place the "integrated" works of Rodgers and Hammerstein at the apex. Scholars consider the more serious-minded books with narrative or character driven musical numbers of the team's musicals as exemplary of the integrated impulse.[18] While not everyone takes this same view, scholars such as Gerald Mast and Mark Steyn do remark on the significance of Rodgers and Hammerstein's contribution.[19] Other scholars, however, have called the concept of integration into question. In *Unfinished Show Business: Broadway Musicals as Works-in-Process*, Bruce Kirle argues that musicals are always "works-in process": incomplete as text, open to variation, and realized in performance.[20] Scott McMillin's *The Musical as Drama* further problematizes the paradigm of the integrated musical. He instead makes a case for the difference between the book and numbers, positing that each occupies a different order of

[16]Mark Grant, *The Rise and Fall of the Broadway Musical* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004), 5.

[17]Integration refers to the seamless transition from dialogue into song and dance in such a way that all of the disparate elements of a musical work together to serve the narrative. Alternatively, some scholars, including Gerald Mast, point to songs as illuminating character rather than progressing action. This concept has been key to musical theater scholarship, often implicitly used. Geoffrey Block gives an excellent overview of integration in his essay "Integration," in *The Oxford Handbook of the American Musical*, ed. Knapp et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 97-110.

[18]"Surrey with a Fringe on Top" and the dream ballet from *Oklahoma!*, the bench scene and Billy's Soliloquy from *Carousel* and the opening of *South Pacific* are repeatedly cited as important examples of integration in the musicals of Rodgers and Hammerstein.

[19]Gerald Mast, *Can't Help Singin': The American Musical on Stage and Screen* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 1987), 201-18 and Mark Steyn, *Broadway Babies Say Goodnight: Musicals Then and Now* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 66-72.

[20]Bruce Kirle, *Unfinished Show Business: Broadway Musicals as Works-in-Process* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005), 2.

time.[21] Both authors recognize the favoring of integration as indicative of a desire to elevate the status of American musical theater. The issue of integration becomes important in my work for understanding how book and musical numbers work together in stage versions and how the relationship between the two elements may or may not change through adaptation.

Other authors take a specifically social analysis of the American musical. For example, in *OurMusicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theater,* John Bush Jones looks at how musicals have told a social history.[22] Jones selects musicals he identifies as explicitly dealing with socio-political issues, including lesser-known shows and more popular fare (i.e. Rodgers and Hammerstein). Raymond Knapp's two volumes on the genre, *The American Musical and the Formation of National Identity* and *The American Musical and the Performance of Personal Identity,* explore how musicals have been used to construct both shared and personal identities.[23] He shows how musicals "engage with central issues that concern us as Americans" and personal issues of gender and sexuality.[24] Elizabeth Wollman's work on rock musicals overlaps with the period with which I am dealing. She also gives a good overview of the changing milieu during the 1960s and beyond as connected to the musical.[25] As my research seeks to trace the interaction of film musical adaptations in the sixties with social changes, the approach of these authors influences my own ways of thinking about this issue.

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[21]McMillin observes that book time progresses while numbers expand time through repetition and "change the mode of characterization. Scott McMillin, *The Musical as Drama* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 8.

[22]John Bush Jones, *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre* (Lebanon, New Hampshire: Brandeis University Press, 2003).

[23]Raymond Knapp, *The American Musical and the Formation of National Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005) and Knapp, *The American Musical and the Performance of Personal Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

[24]Knapp, *National Identity*, 6.

[25]Elizabeth Wollman, *The Theater Will Rock: A History of the Rock Musical* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006).

In recent years, scholars have given more attention to the issue of gender representation in the American musical. Stacy Wolf's feminist interpretation of the musical has been highly influential. In *A Problem Like Maria*, Wolf writes a great deal on Julie Andrews and *The Sound of Music*. She compares the original stage production and its star, Mary Martin, to the film's Julie Andrews. As can be seen, star text plays a large role in Wolf's analysis. Her more recent book, *Changed for Good: A Feminist History of the Broadway Musical*, looks at the changing conventions and roles of female characters from the 1950s to the 2000s. Of particular interest to me are the chapters on the fifties and sixties, which considers female duets and lead characters. Here, she analyzes the relationship between Maria and Anita and their duet "A Boy Like That/I Have a Love." Wolf contends that the next decade emphasizes the female lead outside the structure of the heterosexual relationship, emphasizing the notion of the Single Girl (e.g. *Sweet Charity* and *Cabaret*).

Book-length studies on composers as well as individual shows also inform my dissertation. For example, James Leve's book *Kander and Ebb* contains sections on *Sweet Charity* and *Cabaret*. These works also place individual shows in the larger context of the composers' entire career and oeuvre.[26] While most of the musicals that I study, in either their stage or film incarnations, may not be considered popular or influential enough to warrant a full-length study by other scholars, several notable monographs do exist, particularly on *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music*.[27] These various works supply an abundance of background information on the musicals from their inception to the Broadway run as well as useful analysis.

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[26]James Leve, *Kander and Ebb* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009). Along with Leve's work, other books on individual figures particularly important to my work include John Anthony Gilvey, *Before the Parade Passes By: Gower Champion and the Glorious American Musical* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005); Kevin Boyd Grubb, *Razzle Dazzle: The Life and Work of Bob Fosse* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991); and Philip Lambert, *To Broadway, To Life!: The Musical Theater of Bock and Harnick* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[27]Keith Garebian, *The Making of* West Side Story (Toronto: ECW Press, 1995); Nigel Simeone, *Leonard Bernstein:* West Side Story (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009); Elizabeth Anne Wells, *West Side Story: Cultural*

Film Musical

While scholarship on the musical tends to focus on theatrical versions, discussions of film adaptations and their impact have gained increasing prominence in more recent literature. The second edition of Block's *Enchanted Evenings* indicates this trend. He includes two new chapters on film adaptations of his chosen case studies at the end of each major section. In these chapters, Block discusses alterations made for the films and casting, and offers some context for the filmmakers' decisions. Knapp also includes films in addition to stage musicals in both volumes of his work on the American musical. He moves fluidly from stage to film when looking at *The Sound of Music* and *Cabaret* while privileging the film version of *Rocky Horror*. The second volume, dealing with personal identity, contains an entire chapter on the movie musical from *Singin' in the Rain* (1952) to *Moulin Rouge* (2001). Graham Wood poses the question of whether film musicals should be considered as separate or within the larger genre of the musical.[28] The query becomes particularly important when contending with adaptations. In "The Filmed Musical," Raymond Knapp and Mitchell Morris address issues within film musicals such as adaptation. They identify a "continuum between two poles: filmed versions of theatrically staged productions and versions that translate stage works into more distinctively cinematic styles."[29] Navigating this continuum can illuminate the process of adaptation as well as the question of autonomy.

Perspectives on an American Musical (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2011); Max Wilk, *The Making of* The Sound of Music (New York: Routledge, 2007). And as this dissertation is being written, Caryl Flinn is writing a monograph on the film version of *The Sound of Music*.

[28]Graham Wood, "Why Do They Start to Sing and Dance All of a Sudden?: Examining the Film Musical," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, ed. William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 306.

[29]Raymond Knapp and Mitchell Morris, "The Filmed Musical" in *The Oxford Handbook of the American Musical*, ed. Knapp et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 141.

Works more specifically focused on film musicals remain a smaller contingent in the literature in part due to scholarly focus on music in films from the studio era.[30] While largely focused on this earlier period, the seminal works of Rick Altman and Jane Feuer nevertheless put forward a basic theoretical framework for studying the film musical. Rick Altman's systematic approach develops a theory of this genre's structure based on the basic male/female duality, observing that the musical derives its interest from the merging of the two sexes. He argues for a combination of semantic and syntactic elements in defining the film musical.[31] However, as I noted in my Master's thesis, not all musicals that Altman lists in a specific category work within the confines of the syntax.[32] Feuer, in *The Hollywood Musical*, emphasizes reflexivity, claiming that "cinema takes away aura, but she also gives it back," and the musical, in particular, "can compensate for the distance it inevitably imposes as a mass art" due to its reflexive nature.[33] In order to compensate for the loss of live performance, Feuer illustrates that the film musical turns to a number of reflexive techniques, including adding diegetic audiences and direct address. As two relatively early serious studies of the film musical, Altman and Feuer's works are important starting points. Richard Dyer's influential work on musicals and stardom, particularly his essay "Entertainment and Utopia" and *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society*, also inform studies of musicals and film. In "Entertainment and Utopia," Dyer posits that through a focus on feelings and wish fulfillment, musicals offer a type of utopianism without actually being models of

[30]For example, Ethan Mordden, *The Hollywood Musical* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981) and Steven Cohan, ed. *Hollywood Musicals, The Film Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

[31]For Altman, the semantic consists of narrative format, feature length, presence of a romantic couple, acting, and sound track. A musical's syntax includes the dual-focus narrative strategy, couple as plot, music as plot, narrative as numbers, and the relationship between image and sound (in which the typical hierarchy is often reversed). Rick Altman, *The American Film Musical* (London: British Film Institute, 1987).

[32]See Megan Woller, "A Place for *West Side Story* (1961): Gender, Race, and Tragedy in Hollywood's Adaptation" (Master's Thesis, University of Illinois, 2010), 24.

[33]Jane Feuer, *The Hollywood Musical* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 30.

utopian worlds.[34] Dyer's book on stardom is foundational as an exploration of Hollywood stars as media texts and their impact on popular culture.[35] As the impact of star text of performance and audience perception represents a facet of my own analysis, Dyer's study in this area has proved influential.

Later studies on film musicals address issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in useful ways. Steven Cohan's *Incongruous Entertainment: Camp, Cultural Value, and the MGM Musical* considers the relationship between "Golden Age" Hollywood musicals as camp and popular entertainment.[36] He reevaluates stars such as Judy Garland and Gene Kelly, exploring performance and other aspects. Cohan's work provides a valuable tool for looking at camp in musicals and their significance in both queer and mainstream culture. In *The Musical: Race, Gender, and Performance*, Susan Smith examines depictions of race and gender in the film musical. She claims that the genre presents a "highly amplified, ritualized enactments of racial and gender roles."[37] She looks at the power of woman's voice as a "disruption or challenge to the traditional gender power structures" in films such as *My Fair Lady* and *Funny Girl* (1968). Kelly Kessler's book *Destabilizing the Hollywood Musical: Music, Masculinity, and Mayhem* argues against the decline of the musical in the period from 1966 – 1983, which overlaps with my project. She claims that the musical thrived even while undergoing significant changes. Kessler sees a shift, in a type of musical she calls "ambivalent," towards a darker, more deconstructive tone that incorporates the dissolution of the romance-oriented, domesticated male.[38] She

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[34]Richard Dyer, "Entertainment and Utopia," in *Hollywood Musicals, The Film Reader*, ed. Steven Cohan (New York: Routledge, 2002), 20.

[35]Richard Dyer, *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society*, 2nd edition (New York: Routledge, 2004).

[36]Steven Cohan, *Incongruous Entertainment: Camp, Cultural Value, and the MGM Musical* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005).

[37]Susan Smith, *The Musical: Race, Gender, and Performance* (New York: Wallflower, 2005), 3.

[38]Kelly Kessler, *Destabilizing the Hollywood Musical: Music, Masculinity, and Mayhem* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 9.

perceives a shift from a female-focused genre to a male-focused one with a newly active male protagonist. Kessler connects the musical's masculinist move with the narrative, social, and visual influences of New Hollywood and changing cinematic conventions.

Anthologies such as *Musicals: Hollywood and Beyond* and the newer *The Sound of Musicals* contribute more broadly to the field of film musical literature. *Musicals: Hollywood and Beyond* emphasizes scholarship on the film musical beyond the boundaries of Hollywood and the studio era. Various topics are music and structure, classical Hollywood musicals, star text, European musicals, minorities, and youth culture.[39] Although *The Sound of Musicals* presents a number of alternatives to the Hollywood musical, it does not ignore it.[40] I find Brett Farmer's article that explores the star text of Julie Andrews in the sixties particularly useful to my research.[41] Not only do these two collections give an account of the state of the film musical and its scholarship through a rich variety of contributions, but they offer useful frameworks and points of connection for my work.

Cinema and Media Studies

While the vast body of film literature occasionally contains explicit references and analyses of film musicals, scholarship focused on other genres frequently offer insights applicable to the film musical. Thomas Elsaesser and Raymond Bellour contribute essays on

[39]The classical Hollywood section only consists of the following three articles: Richard Dyer, "The Colour of Entertainment," 23-30; Bruce Babington, "Jumping on the Band Wagon Again: Oedipus Backstage in the Father and Mother of All Musicals," 31-39; and Kenneth MacKinnon, "'I Keep Wishing I Were Somewhere Else': Space and Fantasies of Freedom in the Hollywood Musical," 40-46 in *Musicals, Hollywood and Beyond*, ed. Bill Marshall and Robynn Stilwell (Portland, OR: Intellect, 2000).

[40] For example, Rick Altman revises his notion of dual-focus in the Hollywood film musical to account for the more diachronic move from homosocial bonding to heterosexual (explicitly non-homosexual) romance in the genre. Altman, "From Homosocial to Heterosexual: The Musical's Two Projects" in *The Sound of Musicals*, ed. Steven Cohan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 19-29.

[41] Farmer contrasts the strong-willed image of Andrews with the more contemporary views of the actress as sugar sweet. Brett Farmer, "The Singing Sixties: Rethinking the Julie Andrews Roadshow Musical" in *The Sound of Musicals*, ed. Steven Cohan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 114-27.

acclaimed director Vincente Minnelli and the written for the cinematic medium musical *Gigi* (1958), respectively.[42] Gerald Mast and Gilles Deleuze, among others, sprinkle their scholarly work with references to the musical.[43] Salient connections can be drawn from studies on melodrama. Musicals and film melodrama both extend from nineteenth century forms. Film scholars draw on Peter Brooks's seminal work in literary studies, which considers melodrama as a "mode of heightened dramaticization" or "descriptive term" rather than simply a genre.[44] Similarly, Elsaesser calls melodrama a "historically and socially conditioned mode of experience."[45] He identifies exteriorization, excess, and intensity through visual and aural means as key hallmarks for the melodramatic – significant elements of musicals as well.

The 1960s saw a number of social changes that affected the film industry. The Civil Rights Movement began to alter conventions around on-screen depictions of African Americans.[46] Second-wave feminism, which dealt with such issues as women's sexuality, family, and workplace rights, problematized representations of women.[47] Changing ideas of traditional gender roles allowed for the possibility of more assertive and powerful female

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[42]Raymond Bellour, "Segmenting/analyzing," in *Genre, the Musical: A Reader*, ed. Rick Altman (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul in association with the British Film Institute, 1981), 101-33; Thomas Elsaesser, "Vincente Minelli," in *Genre, the Musical: A Reader*, ed. Rick Altman (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul in association with the British Film Institute, 1981), 11-27.

[43]Gerald Mast, *Film/Cinema/Movie: A Theory of Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 50-51. Mast cites *Singin' in the Rain* as a film that he feels successfully convinces the audience to suspend disbelief while *West Side Story* does not. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota, 1989), 58-61. Deleuze discusses musical comedy from the dancing of Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly to the musical worlds of Minnelli in relation to his concept of the dream image.

[44]Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), ix, xi.

[45]Thomas Elsaesser, "Tales of Sound and Fury: Observations on the Family Melodrama," in *Critical Visions of Film Theory: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, ed. Timothy Corrigan et al. (New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2010), 499.

[46]Issues of racial and ethnic representation have become an important facet of film studies. Some examples include Richard Dyer, "White," in *Critical Visions in Film Theory: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, ed. Timothy Corrigan, et al. (New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2011), 822-39; Ed Guerrero, *Framing Blackness: The African American Image in Film* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); Mark A. Reid, *Redefining Black Film* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

[47] In film theory, second-wave feminism seeks to identify and challenge typical representations of women in classical Hollywood film. See Sue Thornham, ed., *Feminist Film Theory: A Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 1999).

characters. Because of these prominent movements, a newfound sense of freedom infused many films of the period. In particular, the exploration of sexuality was more celebrated than taboo. As the decline of the studio era coincided with these social changes, the so-called New Hollywood directors sought to revitalize the American film industry. Films explored themes of youthful anxiety and sexual frustration, among others. The Hollywood movie musical could not ignore the changes happening across the fabric of American society and reacted in various ways. By this time, generic conventions for the musical had solidified and it was generally considered as either family entertainment or old-fashioned.[48] Therefore, while some adaptations sought to preserve the more conservative viewpoint, others actively participated in the changing social climate.

Implicit and explicit connections to radio and television in the musicals considered in this dissertation have wider implications in media studies more broadly. A good deal of film scholarship takes into account the impact of other media technologies. Edited volumes such as *American Cinema of the 1960s: Themes and Variations* and *Hollywood in the Age of Television* discuss how the studios strove to cope with the rising popularity of television, addressing the use of Technicolor and innovative sound systems, the move towards epics, and even featuring full-length films of prime time TV.[49] Furthermore, while radio remained a significant force for promoting soundtracks in many cases, television quickly rose as a means of advertising and disseminating songs through variety shows and other such programs. In previous decades, film musical stars such as Bing Crosby had fruitful careers in radio. As we will see, television plays an increasingly important role in the careers of many of the actors that I consider.

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[48]A number of factors contribute to these assertions. Early film musicals had been much more experimental, but the Fordist approach of the studio era resulted in highly conventionalized genres. As mentioned above, the Hays Code curbed more adult topics. Consider the highly sanitized film version of Rodgers and Hart's *Pal Joey* (1957) to the more sexually frank and opportunistic characters in the stage version. Also, the primacy of Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical plays supplanted in many minds the more urbane earlier musical comedies.

[49]Barry Keith Grant, ed., *American Cinema of the 1960s: Themes and Variations* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008) and Tino Balio, ed., *Hollywood in the Age of Television* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

Film Music

Film music studies has expanded greatly in recent years and encompasses a wide variety of scholarship. Earlier works tend to focus on the traditional scoring practices of classical Hollywood composers.[50] The early work of Claudia Gorbman, Caryl Flinn, and Kathryn Kalinak set the stage, defining and analyzing types of music on film. More recent literature provides a broader framework with more varied topics, including the use of popular tunes, pre-existing music, changing technologies, and genre studies. Although the film musical is often marginalized in the film music literature more broadly, the approaches laid out in the work of several scholars (discussed below) remain helpful tools. Furthermore, a survey of the literature places film musical studies within the context of the wider discipline.

Although he does not write exclusively about music, Michel Chion's work remains important for acknowledging the key role that sound plays in film.[51] He notes that sound has the ability to enhance the image, affecting the viewer's perception of the work as a whole. His analysis allows for a more autonomous consideration of music while still considering it in terms of the whole film. Chion observes that music can heighten expectation, create a climax, and manipulate both space and time, among other functions. Technological developments, including the move to Dolby digital, make up an important part of his discussion. Chion's theorization of sound and image provides a useful framework for my own exploration of musicalized scenes in film musicals.

Musicals tend to be marginalized or ignored in the related field of film music yet several

[50] Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), Caryl Flinn, *Strains of Utopia: Gender, Nostalgia, and Hollywood Film Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), and Kathryn Kalinak, *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film Score* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992).

[51] I have gleaned the following brief discussion from Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, ed. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) and *Film, a Sound Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

foundational works remain important to any study of music in film. Scholars such as Kathryn Kalinak and Anahid Kassabian, who do not deal with the film musical, offer fruitful approaches that apply to film music analysis.[52] Both authors discuss music as well as dramatic context. In *Settling the Score*, Kalinak positions each analysis historically and then analyzes the scores in relation to the visual and narrative elements as well as looking at the music and even including musical examples. She also argues for a concept of classical Hollywood scoring as providing a loose framework within which possibilities abound. This idea of variation within a set of conventions fits remarkably well as a way of looking at the highly conventional yet dynamic genre of the musical. Kassabian, in her book *Hearing Film: Tracking Identifications in Contemporary Hollywood Film Music*, explores how music informs the processes of identification, engaging with scholarship in musicology and film studies.

Film music literature that goes beyond narrative film music also provides helpful concepts for my own research.[53] For example, scholarship on popular music in film usefully focuses on soundtracks and marketing. In *The Sounds of Commerce: Marketing Popular Film Music*, Jeff Smith observes that the success of soundtrack albums, especially in the 1960s, paved the way for the rise of pop music in Hollywood; cross-marketing of music and films provided a very real and significant impetus for using pop music in films.[54] This cross-marketing is an important concept for the musical as well. Soundtracks helped to familiarize audiences with the

[52]Kalinak, *Settling the Score* and Anahid Kassabian, *Hearing Film: Tracking Identifications in Contemporary Hollywood Film Music* (London: Routledge, 2001).

[53]Film music histories also provide quite useful context for the musical and often even include sections on the genre. See especially Mervyn Cooke, *A History of Film Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) and Kathryn Kalinak, *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[54]Jeff Smith, *The Sounds of Commerce: Marketing Popular Film Music* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998). See also Pamela Robertson Wojcik and Arthur Knight, ed. *Soundtrack Available: Essays on Film and Popular Music* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

music and encourage movie attendance. Long-term effects include the tendency for film adaptations of a show to become the more familiar, even canonical version.

Methodology

My film and musical analysis primarily draw from my own viewings of the films and listenings to their soundtracks. In considering issues of adaptation, I combine music and film analysis in order to tease out the changes made by the various filmmakers. Films often cut, add, or rearrange songs in a meaningful manner. Attending to such musical changes gives a glimpse into the intentions of the filmmakers. Musical analysis of the film scores can therefore tell us much, particularly when coupled with cinematic analysis. My own comparison of the stage versions with the films forms the basis for my analysis. Since stage productions are by nature ephemeral, I use a number of sources in order to try to pinpoint various aspects related to the original Broadway production of my case studies. Each of the shows discussed have published librettos and vocal scores (*West Side Story* also has a published full orchestral score) widely available for study, which provide an important starting point.[55] After reading through these sources on their own, I engaged in a side-by-side comparison of the published sources with the films. While watching, I tracked the changes made such as cut scenes, altered dialogue, added scenes, or rearranged sections of dialogue and music. Therefore, my analysis is based in careful

[55]Librettos: Arthur, Laurents, Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, and Jerome Robbins, *West Side Story: A Musical* (New York: Random House, 1958); Meredith Willson, *The Music Man* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons: 1958); Michael Stewart, Lee Adams, and Charles Strouse, *Bye Bye Birdie* (New York: DBS Publications, Inc., 1958); Richard Rodgers, et al., *The Sound of Music: A New Musical Play* (New York: Random House, 1960); Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe, *Camelot: A New Musical* (New York: Random House, 1961); Alan Jay Lerner, *Paint Your Wagon: A Musical Play in Two Acts* (New York: Coward-McMann, 1952); John Kander, et al. *Cabaret* (New York: Random House, 1967). Scores: Leonard Bernstein, *West Side Story* (New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1994); Meredith Willson, *The Music Man*, Vocal Score (New York: Frank Music Corp. and Rinimer Corporation, 1958); Michael Stewart, Lee Adams, and Charles Strouse, *Bye Bye Birdie*, Vocal Score (New York: Edwin H. Morris & Co., 1962); Richard Rodgers, et al., *The Sound of Music*, Vocal Selections (New York: Williamson Music, 1959); Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe, *Camelot*, Vocal Score (New York: Chappell Music Company, 1962); Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe, *Paint Your Wagon: A Musical Play*, Vocal Score (New York: Chappell Music Company, 1952); John Kander, et al., *Harold Prince (in association with Ruth Mitchell) Presents Cabaret: the New Musical*, Vocal Score (New York: Times Square Music Publications Co., 1968).

comparison of the original librettos, vocal scores, and the films. Where possible, I also consult secondary sources that provide further details regarding the original stage productions, which include memoirs, including Meredith Willson's myriad writings on his work, as well as "making of" books.[56] These sources provide information on the stage productions that fill in details that cannot be gleaned from librettos and scores alone.

As most of the films considered do not have readily available screenplays or film scores, my own transcription provides the basis of my analysis. The special edition of *West Side Story*, however, does include a published screenplay.[57] Therefore, I was able to triangulate the original stage script, screenplay, and completed film in order to track changes to dialogue and lyrics. In my other case studies, however, I simply transcribed any added or altered dialogue and lyrics. Repeated viewings as well as the isolation of several scenes formed the foundation for this process. I followed a similar procedure in dealing with the music. Vocal selections from the film versions of *The Sound of Music*, *Paint Your Wagon*, and *Cabaret*, for example, have been published.[58] While these resources are quite helpful in terms of comparing melodic or harmonic content, only vocal scores are available. Consequently, any discussion of instrumentation or orchestration stems from my own careful listening, again through repetition and isolation of moments within the films.

[56]Examples of secondary sources of this type include Keith Garebian, *The Making of* West Side Story (Toronto: ECW Press, 1995); Julia Hirsch, *The Sound of Music: The Making of America's Favorite Movie* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1993); Charles Strouse, *Put On a Happy Face: A Broadway Memoir* (New York: Sterling, 2008); Max Wilk, *The Making of* The Sound of Music (New York: Routledge, 2007); Meredith Willson, *And There I Stood with My Piccolo* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948); Meredith Willson, *Eggs I Have Laid* (New York: Holt, 1955); and Meredith Willson, *But He Doesn't Know the Territory* (New York: Putnam, 1959).

[57]Ernest Lehman, *West Side Story*, Screenplay (Santa Monica, CA: MGM Home Entertainment, 1961).

[58]Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, *The Sound of Music* (New York: Hal Leonard, 1959 and 1965); Alan Jay Lerner, Frederick Loewe, and Andre Previn, *Paint Your Wagon: Vocal Selections* (New York: Chappell, 1970); John Kander and Fredd Ebb, *Vocal Selections from Cabaret* (New York: The Times Square Music Publications Company, 1972).

My chapter on *West Side Story* grows out of my Master's thesis on the film, and I was able to do some archival work in the summer of 2010. In the Sid Ramin papers housed in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Columbia University, I had access to production notes and orchestral scores from the stage and film versions of *West Side Story*. As such, I was able to confirm my own observations as well as shed some light on the process of adaptation.[59] Due to the scope and goals of this project, I did not engage in archival research for all of the musicals. Therefore, I base my analysis on study of the films, librettos, and vocal scores, situating it within secondary sources.

After tracking the changes made from stage to screen, I place the film musicals in their socio-cultural context. In doing so, I identify particular issues or trends that can be found in the musicals. Some of these issues infuse both versions of the musicals while others are particular to one or the other. Therefore, my analysis at times considers how these issues play out in both versions – this happens more frequently when a film remains fairly faithful to its stage source. At other times, a significant change necessitates a more marked distinction between the two versions within my discussion. Changing historical context also allows both versions to accrue meaningful associations. On the other hand, the fixity of the films represents a difference in how performance and other artistic choices may interact with their historical moment.

As part of my examination of the films deals with how the filmmakers translate the musicals to the screen, a brief explanation of the elements that make them specifically cinematic becomes necessary. In some cases, the directors and their collaborators highlight the theatricality of these works by focusing on frontality and other elements that connote a sense of "staginess." More often, however, the filmmakers utilize techniques only available to cinema and even

[59]See Megan Woller, "A Place for *West Side Story*."

highlight them. Therefore, aspects such as framing, scale, angle, composition, and location shooting all form a significant part of what makes these films *cinematic* and fundamentally distinct from their stage counterparts.

Audience and reception form a part of my analysis of the film musicals considered in this dissertation. While some work on demographics and possible audiences has been done, this issue can be hard to pinpoint with the multitude of theaters across the country.[60] Therefore, I explore the possibilities of broader audiences in the move from New York-based Broadway to more widely available Hollywood. Intersections between these possible audiences and the viewpoints presented by the films themselves also suggest particular possible intended audiences. I also consider film reviews. The reviews considered here are by and large written by major film critics for large newspapers in major U.S. cities. The critics themselves such as Bosley Crowther – a prominent figure as a critic for the *New York Times* from the 1940s through the late sixties – are journalists and popular writers turned film critics. Furthermore, they are also predominately white male writers and thus represent only a partial view of possible receptions of any given film. Even with this somewhat limited view and biases, these critics offer ideas which in part help to establish why some film adaptations failed while others gained lasting success. As I am dealing with a period considered as the death of the film musical, reception of these films can illuminate some reasons for this perspective.

Chapter Outline

This dissertation contains seven case studies in five chapters. I consider the three films *West Side Story*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Cabaret* individually as they represent highly significant examples of musical adaptations from the beginning, middle, and end of the period

[60]For example, Brett Farmer considers female audiences and Julie Andrews's films in his article, 114-27.

respectively. I group together *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* in Chapter 2 and *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* in Chapter 4 because examining these films in pairs reveals meaningful connections and changing objectives in the production of film musicals. In each chapter, I outline relevant socio-political and industrial events as context for my analysis. Sections that give basic facts about each film, summarize indicators of popular and critical reception, discuss the major figures involved in the films, look at approaches to fidelity, as well as topical analysis occur throughout the dissertation. My analysis combines relevant plot discussion with examination of cinematic technique and music to the extent that these elements all work together in each of the films.

Chapter 1 – Seeds of Change: *West Side Story* (1961). This chapter looks at the ways in which the film of *West Side Story* alters the stage version. The filmmakers changed the order of songs and cut the "Somewhere" ballet yet retained much of Jerome Robbins's choreography. The translation to screen reflects the impact of the Production Code, the star system, and the practice of dubbing non-singing actors. Moreover, this chapter takes into account how changes to Leonard Bernstein's score coupled with cinematic technique modify the dramatic arc. The latter part of the chapter explores how the film conforms to existing stereotypes and issues of representation in race and gender yet in some ways subtly challenges them, focusing on the female characters.

Chapter 2 – A Family Affair: *The Music Man* (1962) and *Bye Bye Birdie* (1963). My case studies for this chapter are *The Music Man* (1962) and *Bye Bye Birdie* (1963). I place these films together in order to investigate the depictions of small-town life in the American Midwest and the connection to a type of social conservatism that emphasizes family values and sexual purity. At the same time, their different time periods, 1912 and 1957 respectively, offer diverse

views and cultural interactions. As such, I look at how the films display elements of early or mid-twentieth century life and values through such aspects as music, movement, and sets. In particular, both of these musicals employ markers of distinctly American music from different eras to help ground them in a specific time and place. *The Music Man* rouses the River City townspeople through marching band music while rock 'n' roll drives the teenage population of *Bye Bye Birdie*. I look at both differences from and similarities to the stage version in dialogue, structure, and musical numbers. Casting plays an important role in these two films as all of them retain some of their Broadway actors.

Chapter 3 – The Last Hurrah: *The Sound of Music* (1965). The entirety of this chapter delves into different aspects of *The Sound of Music* (1965). After exploring its enormous popularity, I compare the film, directed by Robert Wise, with Rodgers and Hammerstein's original script and score. Part of this chapter includes an analysis of the aspects that give the film a more cinematic quality, such as location photography. The complicated relationship between this film and social relevance makes up the remainder of the chapter. These sections reflect on the film's ambiguous treatment of politics, social ills, and feminism, outlining scholars' interpretations as well as offering other explanations. I also enter into a discussion about the connection between this musical, especially in its film incarnation, and the American folk revival. Finally, the chapter ends with an acknowledgement of the film's enduring legacy.

Chapter 4 – The End of an Era? *Camelot* (1967) and *Paint Your Wagon* (1969). This chapter focuses on two films generally considered failures from the late sixties, *Camelot* (1967) and *Paint Your Wagon* (1969). Both of these films are based on stage shows written by the successful team Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe and are directed by Joshua Logan. Each film is rather lengthy and contains a mix of staginess and cinematic qualities that I tease out

through comparison with information regarding the stage productions. A portion of this discussion is framed as a tension between realism and fantasy that works differently in *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon*. I also reflect on how these films interact with such issues as ethnicity, feminism, and other social and political concerns. Furthermore, they reveal a sexual openness that will come to a head later as explored in the final chapter. As such, it becomes necessary to place these films in the context of the sexual revolution and burgeoning New Hollywood aesthetics. The central conflict of *Camelot* is adultery while the film version of *Paint Your Wagon* adds a three-way marriage between two male characters and the one female. Each film alludes to sex in a much more explicit manner than previous film musicals could or would.

Chapter 5 – All Hell Breaks Loose! *Cabaret* (1972). My final chapter discusses Bob Fosse's film *Cabaret* (1972) in detail. Exploring Bob Fosse as a filmmaker, the chapter compares *Cabaret* with the significantly less successful *Sweet Charity* (1969) in order to better understand the particular aspects that do or do not work in his films. Of course, a comparison of the film version with the original stage production is at the core of the chapter. *Cabaret* famously cuts songs that do not occur as diegetic performances in the Kit Kat Club. It also alters some major plot points and key characters. The film uses distancing techniques designed to avoid typical film musical practices. Threads that run throughout much of this dissertation, including connections to feminism and American topics, again come to the forefront. Furthermore, the film has become so influential that it has shaped subsequent revivals. The 1998 Broadway revival drew heavily from this version, even adding songs written for the film.

In analyzing these seven Hollywood adaptations of Broadway musicals, my dissertation combines musicology and film studies even as it intersects with discourses on gender, race and ethnicity, and social history. Many film musicals from this time are passed over because they are

deemed unworthy of notice. Although admittedly several movie musicals from the sixties are not considered high quality by traditional standards, the study of them in context remains valuable. During this fifteen-year span, many film musicals were economically viable allowing for the continuation of the genre's production. More importantly, they enter into a dialogue with important issues from this transitional time. In the process of adaptation, the relationship of these musicals with their social context varies, some film engaging in sharper commentary than the stage versions while others appear more ambivalent. I will explore how these films make intersections with various topics more or less clear through adaptation in my chapters.

CHAPTER 1 – Seeds of Change: *West Side Story* (1961)

Introduction

Just a few years after the Broadway opening, the film version of *West Side Story* premiered in 1961. *West Side Story*, a relatively successful stage musical, was an innovative collaboration between heavy hitters Jerome Robbins, Leonard Bernstein, Arthur Laurents, and Stephen Sondheim. For better or worse, the film industry transformed the stage production of *West Side Story* into a Hollywood musical, thereby adopting its own particular conventions. As these conventions were changing throughout the 1960s, the film version of *West Side Story* provides a transitional example of the period's film musicals. The approach to adaptation reflects a tension between adherence to more traditional ideas of the genre and a desire to move forward. The film remains relatively faithful to the stage version, preserving much of the music, dance, and dialogue. However, the filmmakers made a number of changes in order to work better within the perceived realism of the cinematic medium. In this chapter, I explore the alterations and how they relate to burgeoning movements that will become major forces later in the decade. Therefore, I split the chapter into various sections that focus on certain issues within the film, including fidelity to the original show, the major character relationships, and most particularly the depiction of women. There are many other aspects that could be discussed in more detail, including the depiction of the male characters and ethnicity, and I refer the reader to my work on this elsewhere.[1]

More broadly, the United States was on the brink of great societal changes at this time. In the 1950s, a postwar crisis involving women, the workplace, and parenthood, rocked the country.

[1]Megan Woller, "A Place for *West Side Story*: Gender, Race, and Tragedy in Hollywood's Adaptation," Master's Thesis, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, 2010.

While Rosie the Riveter had been an emblem of wartime working women, many women had lost their jobs and competitive wages with the return of the soldiers. The rhetoric, reinforced by popular culture, encouraged women to re-domesticate themselves, taking care of their husbands and children. At the same time, "Momism," the notion that overbearing mothers produced effeminate sons, was a rampant belief. As Anne McCleer observes in her article on *Mary Poppins*, "mothers in the 1950s were becoming defined by their inability to carry out their mother role and by the dangers that such ineptitude posed to future generations of American children."[2] Yet by the early sixties, the feminist movement was poised to become a major influence. Furthermore, civil rights movements more broadly, though especially black rights, would soon gain momentum across the country. On May 6, 1960 President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Civil Rights Act of 1960, designed to help Southern blacks to vote. In January of 1960, John F. Kennedy became the thirty-fifth president of the United States and in some ways a great optimism characterized the beginning of this turbulent decade. However, the Cold War continued and such events as the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion were telling of the turmoil. The ways in which the film version of *West Side Story* portrays ethnicity and gender (particularly women) hints at shifting viewpoints while ostensibly maintaining problematic representations. This chapter explores how the differences between the film and its stage predecessor reveal larger ideas of the musical as a genre as well as industry and socio-cultural factors at the time.

At the same time, the Hollywood studio system was experiencing a crisis. Barry Keith Grant observes that "emblematic of the turmoil and transition the industry would face in the

[2]Anne McLeer, "Practical Perfection? The Nanny Negotiates Gender, Class, and Family Contradictions in 1960s Popular Culture" *NWSA Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Summer, 2002), 85.

1960s, the decade began with strikes in 1960 by writers and the Screen Actors Guild."[3] Though the strikes successfully resolved with actors gaining payments for movies broadcast on television, the decade would only see more tumult and changes. The Old Guard of the studio system slowly disappeared from the ranks of Hollywood. Symbolically, Clark Gable – a studio star – died of a heart attack in November of 1960. Studios continued to try to compete with television. However, they also began to take advantage of the newer medium as evidenced by NBC's "Saturday Night at the Movies" and made-for-television films. The decline of the studio system and Hollywood's various tactics for bringing audiences to the movie theater constitutes a thread throughout my dissertation as the musicals discussed use different means of adapting.

The continued influence of the Motion Picture Production Code in Hollywood at the time also shapes the film version of *West Side Story*. Yet many films began to openly flout the Code's restrictions by the 1950s. With films such as the epic *Giant* (1956), the comedy *Some Like It Hot* (1959), and Hitchcock's thriller *Psycho* (1960), Hollywood's boundaries were more flexible during the filming of *West Side Story*. Therefore, the filmmakers could address many of the large issues present in the narrative, such as gang violence and interracial relationships, with more freedom. On other hand, the Production Code still had some impact on the language and how sexual references could be made. For instance, some of the dialogue and lyrics were altered in order to eliminate any possible reference to profanity. Furthermore, the sexual relationship between Tony and Maria is only vaguely suggested. My analysis of changes made for the film will include salient examples of where and how the Code was most likely applied in order to appease the board. While the rules imposed by the Production Code were losing hold by the

[3]Barry Keith Grant, "Introduction: Movies and the 1960s," in *American Cinema of the 1960s: Themes and Variations*, ed. Barry Keith Grant (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 11.

early sixties, some of the alterations for Robert Wise's and Jerome Robbins's film illustrate the continued concern for appropriate language and behavior that the Code engendered.

The Show

The Broadway production of *West Side Story* opened in the Winter Garden Theatre on September 26, 1957. The musical was billed as being conceived, directed, and choreographed by Jerome Robbins. Loosely based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the musical tells the tragic story of two lovers, Maria and Tony, from rival gang affiliations and different ethnicities. The musical also includes Riff, Tony's best friend and leader of the Jets, Bernardo, Maria's brother and leader of the Puerto Rican Sharks, and Anita, Bernardo's girlfriend and Maria's best friend. Playwright Arthur Laurents wrote the book, composer and conductor Leonard Bernstein wrote the music, and a young Stephen Sondheim wrote the lyrics. The production starred relative unknowns Carol Lawrence and Larry Kert as Maria and Tony respectively and Chita Rivera as Anita. The show received mixed reviews from critics and won two of the six Tony Awards for which it had been nominated; while Robbins won for Best Choreography, the musical lost Best Musical to *The Music Man*. The show subsequently ran for a respectable 732 performances. Despite the somewhat modest success, scholars have since considered it as a key work in American musical theater. As such, it has garnered more scholarly attention than any other musical that I discuss. The remainder of this section provides a brief overview of this scholarship that points readers to the work done on the musical.

The early reception of the Broadway production has long been a talking point for musical theater scholars. A number of authors have acknowledged the mixed reaction that the show initially garnered, including Geoffrey Block, Ethan Mordden, Elizabeth A. Wells, and Humphrey Burton. The contributions of the collaborators were both lauded and disparaged, depending on

the view of the critic. Nigel Simeone and Keith Garebian in particular both include a good distillation of the varying reactions of critics.[4] Brooks Atkinson's first sentence in his *New York Times* review on September 27, 1957 sums up both the shock and respect that many other reviewers shared; he stated that "although the material is horrifying, the workmanship is admirable."[5] While Atkinson found much to praise in the musical, he was disconcerted by the tragic nature of the story. Walter Kerr wrote a famously mixed review for the *New York Herald Tribune*. He focused on the nervous energy of Robbins' choreography but takes time to complain that Bernstein "served the needs of the onstage threshing machine… dramatizing the footwork rather than lifting emotions into song."[6] He also found the singing and acting in the show lacking both technical ability and energy.

One of the most important trends in American theatre has been that of the so-called integrated musical. Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II's *Show Boat* (1927) is often hailed as a landmark in the journey towards integration. Geoffrey Block marks the musical as an "unprecedented integration of music and drama."[7] Thirty years before *West Side Story*, Kern and Hammerstein's musical couples a concern with songs connected to the plot with serious subject matter, including racial tension. Despite earlier attempts at integration, the musicals of Rodgers and Hammerstein that are considered to usher in the "era of integration." *Oklahoma!* and *Carousel* (1945) attempt to tell the story not only through dialogue but extended musical sequences with song and dance. The preoccupation with the "integrated" musical in the middle of the twentieth had a significant impact on all of the creators of *West Side Story*.

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[4]Keith Garebian, *The Making of* West Side Story (Toronto: ECW Press, 1995), 134-37, and Nigel Simeone, *Leonard Bernstein:* West Side Story (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 113-36.

[5]Brooks Atkinson, "Theatre: The Jungles of the City," *New York Times*, Sept. 27, 1957.

[6]Walter Kerr, "*West Side Story*," *New York Herald Tribune*, Sept. 27, 1957.

[7] Geoffrey Block, *Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from* Showboat *to Sondheim and Lloyd Webber*, 2nd Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 20.

The move towards integration included increasing the role of dancing, an aspect which had a particularly large impact on *West Side Story*. Developments by choreographers such George Balanchine and Agnes DeMille influenced Jerome Robbins and his conception of how movement and dance work in *West Side Story*. The opening of the musical distills months of mounting tension between the Sharks and Jets into a few minutes of highly charged dance and pantomime that finally erupts into a street fight. Irene Dash compares the dance style with Shakespeare's language, saying that "hyperbole characterizes dance rather than language. Extravagance of movement provides insights into character…" much in the same way that extravagant language reveals character in *Romeo and Juliet*.[8] Other key events and psychological moments are told through movement rather than song in this musical. In Robbins's conception, "dance told much of the story, dance revealed character, dance incarnated the tragedy."[9] Robbins develops the role of dance in *West Side Story* so that many of the key events in the plot are told choreographically. Paul Laird credits this musical as marking "the full integration of dance into the Broadway musical and the true arrival of the choreographer-director."[10] As not only the choreographer but director, Robbins assumed an enormous amount of control in the work's development, working closely with the other collaborators and carefully crafting every movement throughout the show.

Musical theatre scholars deal with Bernstein's complex music for the show extensively. Geoffrey Block discusses the antecedents and conceptual beginnings of the score, observing the influence of Marc Blitzstein's *Regina* and even Bernstein's own music such as *Candide*. Paul Laird and bruce d. mcclung compare Bernstein's compositional style for the stage with that of

[8]Irene G. Dash, *Shakespeare and the American Musical* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 89.
[9]Garebian, 14.
[10]Paul R Laird, "Choreographers, Directors and the Fully Integrated Musical," in *Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, ed. William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 224.

Kurt Weill. *West Side Story* serves as an example based on its unification of musical styles down to the unit of intervals.[11] More recently, Elizabeth A. Wells has illustrated the diverse influences of a mixture of classical and popular composers such as Igor Stravinsky, Frederic Chopin, Richard Wagner, David Diamond, and George Gershwin. While Wells argues for interest within Bernstein's eclecticism, Block looks at Bernstein's use of motives in the score to provide both unity and dramatic purpose. He lauds the music as "a complex score rich in organicism and motivic and other musical techniques associated with the 19th century European operatic ideal."[12] Similarly, Joseph Swain shows how Bernstein's music successfully enhances the show's tragic drama and praises the use of musical continuity to portray the drama. He sees Bernstein's motivic organization as a sense of "destiny in the music."[13]

Larry Stempel considers the operatic nature of *West Side Story* in "The Musical Play Expands" and *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater*.[14] The article looks at *West Side Story* as a "ballet-opera," discussing the marriage of music and dance.[15] He places the collaborators of *West Side Story* in the midst of others writing progressive musicals, including Frank Loesser and the team of Lerner and Loewe. Bernstein's insistence on composing not only the songs but dance music as well, despite Broadway conventions, provided a "fluid integration of dance with [both] dialogue and song."[16] Stempel asserts that the "shifting combinations" of words, music, and dance created a "new Broadway poetic" that appealed to the imagination of

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[11]Paul R. Laird and bruce d. mcclung, "Musical Sophistication on Broadway: Kurt Weill and Leonard Bernstein," in *Cambridge Companion to the Musical,* ed. William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 200.

[12]Ibid., 246.

[13]Joseph Swain, *The Broadway Musical: A Critical and Musical Survey* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2002), 241.

[14] Larry Stempel, "The Musical Play Expands" *American Music* 10, no. 2 (Summer, 1992): 136-169 and Larry Stempel, *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010).

[15]Stempel, "Musical Play," 136-169.

[16]Ibid., 161.

the audience.[17] In *Showtime*, Stempel discusses *West Side Story* in the chapter entitled, "Opera, In Our Own Way." He distinguishes "Opera on Broadway" (e.g. *Carmen Jones, The Consul*) from "Broadway Opera" (e.g. *Porgy and Bess, Street Scene*).[18] *West Side Story* fits into the realm of "Broadway Opera" due to Bernstein's sophisticated music and a hybrid approach to the overall show, "enlarging the possibilities of the genre."[19]

With both the increased role of dance and Bernstein's music, *West Side Story* has often been considered to defy classification. Elizabeth A. Wells points out that the show was "considered a new genre of musical theatre, unclassifiable by previous standards."[20] A number of musical theatre styles influenced the conception of this musical. It contains elements of musical comedy, ballet, and opera with a tragic story infused with social commentary. Bernstein summed up the issue in his *West Side Story* Log, writing "Chief Problem: to tread the fine line between opera and Broadway, between realism and poetry, ballet and "just dancing," abstract and representational."[21] According to Arthur Laurents, the musical "doesn't quite fit into any category" and therefore they termed it "lyric theatre."[22]

The result of attempting to "tread the fine line" between these elements is that the musical contains aspects of each. In "The Musical Play Expands," Larry Stempel posits "*West Side Story* is clearly a work in the tradition of the musical play… Yet the translation is accomplished not by words or music, or in song or dance alone. It is achieved through shifting

[17]Ibid., 162.
[18]Stempel, *Showtime*, 373-396.
[19]Ibid., 399.
[20]Elizabeth A. Wells, *West Side Story: Cultural Perspectives on an American Musical* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2011), 71.
[21]Leonard Bernstein, "Excerpts from a *West Side Story* Log" in *Findings* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 145-6.
[22]Arthur Laurents, *Mainly on Directing*: *Gypsy, West Side Story, and Other Musicals* (New York: Knopf, 2009), 145. Although not explicitly stated, Laurents and the other collaborators may have been influenced by the French blending of opera and dance, termed "lyric theatre."

combinations of all of these according to a new Broadway musical poetic."[23] No matter how *West Side Story* is labeled, it can be seen as a culmination of the integrated impulse. On the other hand, Ethan Mordden points out that the musical tragedy can also be considered as part of "the start of the next era, in which the musical play breaks *away* from the Rodgers and Hammerstein model into new structures."[24] *West Side Story* not only represented the product of the previous era but a push in the new direction.

In the minds of the creators, this musical represented the ultimate collaboration. In his recent book, *Mainly on Directing,* Laurents claims that the success of *West Side Story* stemmed from the fact that they were all "striving for the same goal" while working on the show.[25] Similarly Bernstein gushed "I guess what made it come out right is that we all really *collaborated*; we were all writing the *same* show."[26] Much of this feeling came from the creative process itself. Bernstein wrote not only the songs but the music that would accompany the dance. Working closely with Robbins for the dance music, Bernstein could cater to the needs of the ballet while unifying the score. Similarly, Sondheim not only collaborated intimately with Bernstein but with Laurents. Sondheim derived the lyrics' language from the characters' speech, sometimes even developing dialogue into song lyrics.

All of the elements discussed above come together to form a unique Broadway musical; the literature on *West Side Story* covers a number of varying opinions about the significance or impact of the work on subsequent theatre. Stempel asserts that the musical "expanded the possibilities of what a Broadway song-and-dance show could do."[27] Rodgers and Hammerstein

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[23]Stempel, "Musical Play," 162.

[24]Ethan Mordden, *Coming Up Roses*: *The Broadway Musical in the 1950s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 238.

[25]Laurents, 97.

[26]Bernstein, 147.

[27]Stempel, "Musical Play," 160.

had introduced serious subject matter in both *Oklahoma!* and *Carousel*. While both musicals included the death of a main character, *Carousel* went a step farther; Billy Bigelow hit his wife and committed suicide after a failed robbery and murder attempt. *West Side Story* took a full-blown Shakespearean tragedy and transformed it into social commentary. The collaborators took issues of race and juvenile delinquency in New York City and applied them to the story of the star-crossed lovers. Norris Houghton claims that the show is "conceived as a social document."[28] Laurents reworked the tragic events to depend on acts of prejudice rather than chance. Sondheim, however, has been quoted as saying that *West Side Story* is "about theater…" and focusing on the techniques within the show.[29]

Furthermore, several scholars focus on the depiction of gender and ethnicity in the musical. Carol Oja discusses *West Side Story* in conjunction with *The Music Man*, which premiered in the same year. She asserts that both musicals reflect the cultural anxieties of 1957, including racism, in ways that complement each other. Oja observes of the Jets and Sharks that "collectively they expose communities that struggle outside the economic and social mainstream, with violence against one another as a predominant social strategy."[30] The Jets, "barely a step above the Sharks – that is, the Puerto Ricans – on the assimilation ladder" focus on the newer immigrants as a way of coping with their own outsider status.[31] Elizabeth A. Wells also discusses the implications of the depiction of Hispanics in the show. In her discussion on Maria and Anita, she notes that the "women – widows, really – convey the horror of a men's world, but they also must abjure their ethnic allegiance."[32] In her book, Stacy Wolf stresses the homosociality

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[28]Norris Houghton, "*Romeo and Juliet* and *West Side Story*: An Appreciation," in *Romeo and Juliet/West Side Story* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1965), 11.

[29]Qtd. in *Readings* on 'West Side Story', ed. Mary E. Williams (San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2001), 54.

[30]Carol Oja, "*West Side Story* and *The Music Man*: Whiteness, Immigration, and Race in the US during the Late 1950s," *Studies in Musical Theatre* 3: 1 (2009), 25.

[31]Oja, 23.

[32]Wells, 155.

inherent in the song "A Boy Like That/I Have a Love" and the importance of the relationship between Maria and Anita.[33]

The popular musical has also been the subject of several books.[34] Keith Garebian and Nigel Simeone focus on different aspects in the creation of the musical. Garebian looks at the background and contributions of each of the contributors. He also traces the musical from its original conception of *East Side Story* through its development, and outlines the tryout and rehearsal process through the initial reception. Simeone adopts a more musical point of view. He gleans a great deal of information from the manuscripts, including the working relationship between Bernstein and his orchestrators and songs that were written but eventually dropped. Elizabeth A. Wells goes beyond her predecessors, and her work is therefore particularly useful. She details the genesis of the musical, Bernstein's compositional style, and how the musical represents ethnicity, gender, and delinquency. She draws on extensive archival research and interviews for her informed study of the musical. Each of these works provides valuable insight into the original stage production.

Film Version

The 1961 film *West Side Story* launched the musical from a reasonable success to blockbuster status. Even before its release, writers, such as Philip K. Scheuer of the *Los Angeles Times* claimed that "if any one production can restore Hollywood's old-time glory, that one is *West Side Story*."[35] Once released in New York on October 18, 1961 and in Los Angeles on December 13th, the film did not disappoint. Bosley Crowther declares that the film is "nothing

[33]Stacy Wolf, *Changed for Good: A Feminist History of the Broadway Musical* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 46-9.

[34] Keith Garebian, *The Making of* 'West Side Story' (Toronto: ECW Press, 1995); Nigel Simeone, *Leonard Bernstein: West Side Story* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009); and Elizabeth A. Wells, *West Side Story: Cultural Perspectives on an American Musical* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2011).

[35]Philip K. Scheuer, "*West Side Story* Takes over Studio: Hollywood's Boom Era Recalled by Sweep of Dance Spectacle" *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 12, 1960.

short of a cinematic masterpiece," praising the directing of both Wise and Robbins, and Robbins's choreography especially.[36] He also mentions Natalie Wood, George Chakiris, and Rita Moreno as giving captivating performances in their respective roles. *West Side Story* went on to win ten Academy Awards, including Best Picture.[37] Sid Ramin, Irwin Kostal, Johnny Green, and Saul Chaplin won the Academy Award for Best Scoring of a Musical Picture due to their work on the film score.

The film soundtrack spent fifty-four weeks at the number one spot on the Billboard charts. Not only did the film soundtrack do extremely well, but the musical generated a number of hit songs that have had an extended afterlife of their own. While Johnny Mathis covered "Maria" in 1960, most covers appeared after 1961. "I Feel Pretty," "One Hand, One Heart," "Tonight," and especially "Somewhere" and "Maria" were covered by a number of artists after the film premiered. Since then such artists as Perry Como, The Temptations, Dionne Warwick, and Julie Andrews have all recorded *West Side Story* songs. In my Master's thesis, I discuss how the film convention of the Overture and end credits may have contributed to the later success of these songs.[38] The film certainly did much to alert wider audiences to Bernstein's score and advance the longevity of the songs.

Although the Broadway musical has earned a position as an innovative and influential work, *West Side Story*'s place in film and film music literature remains much more tenuous. An enormous success for the time, the film lacks the influential status perceived in the Broadway version. As a result, *West Side Story* maintains a relatively marginal role in the literature on

[36]Bosley Crowther, "Film at the Rivoli is Called Masterpiece," *New York Times*, Oct. 19, 1961.

[37]Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins won Best Director. Awards for Best Supporting Actor and Actress went to George Chakiris (Bernardo) and Puerto Rican actress, Rita Moreno (Anita). Although the music also garnered recognition, the Oscar for Best Music, Scoring of a Musical Picture was received by those who worked on the music for the film, not Bernstein.

[38]Woller, 31-2.

Hollywood musicals. Indeed, the movie musical itself holds a rather niche place in film history not quite within the realm of broader film music scholarship. *West Side Story* may receive a small amount of attention in this larger area due to the sheer success of the soundtrack.

Nonetheless, the musical has found a place within discourses of race, gender, and adaptation studies. Susan Smith emphasizes that the film contains "racist hostilities *between* cultures with a study of the patriarchal oppression of women *within* the individual cultures."[39] Therefore, the performance of race and gender within this film are closely tied. Smith cites Anybodys and Anita as two strong women within their own cultures, each attempting to resist oppression in their own ways. Frances Negrón-Muntaner's article "Feeling Pretty: *West Side Story* and Puerto Rican Identity Discourses" begins with the statement, "there is no single American cultural product that haunts Puerto Rican discourses" more than *West Side Story.*[40] Negrón-Muntaner asserts that despite the fact that it purposely avoids authenticity, some elements of the film are able to speak to the Puerto Rican community. In *Shakespeare and the American Musical*, Irene Dash addresses how *West Side Story* intersects with and departs from *Romeo and Juliet*. She stresses the importance of the adapters' decision to tie the story to a particular time and place and using social commentary rather than tragic fate drive the plot.[41] Julie Sanders also looks at the film as an adaptation of the Shakespeare. She mentions both the "politicized treatment" of the subject matter as well as the focus on youth and lack of central adult characters.[42]

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[39]Susan Smith, *The Musical: Race, Gender, and Performance* (New York: Wallflower, 2005), 50.

[40]Frances Negrón-Muntaner, "Feeling Pretty: *West Side Story* and Puerto Rican Identity Discourses," *Social Text* 63 (Summer, 2000), 83.

[41]Dash, 81.

[42]Julie Sanders, *Shakespeare and Music: Afterlives and Borrowings* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2007), 75.

A number of what some have conceived as problems with the film potentially hindered its status within the discipline's scholarship, problems summed up in what Laurents has called an "uncinematic, mangled, and also anti-Puerto Rican movie."[43] The lack of a single director, discussed in further detail in the next section, may have produced inconsistencies that led Laurents to uncharitably label the film as "uncinematic." He also pinpoints one of the primary issues within the film – the representation of the Puerto Rican characters, which I will later discuss in more detail. Despite the problems, Laurents's term "uncinematic" does not resonate with the film as it exploits the medium through cinematographic and editing techniques. In fact, much of Laurents's dislike stems from the differences from the stage production, making it "untheatrical" rather than "uncinematic."

The Players

The stage production of *West Side Story* famously brought together what Jerome Robbins termed a bunch of "long-haired artists:" Robbins himself, Leonard Bernstein, Arthur Laurents, and later Stephen Sondheim.[44] Geoffrey Block discusses this aspect of the show, presenting it as extraordinary in its tight collaboration.[45] Of course, as both director and choreographer, Jerome Robbins assumed a great deal of control while still working closely with his collaborators. Laird thus credits this musical as marking "the full integration of dance into the Broadway musical and the true arrival of the choreographer-director."[46] Not all of the collaborators worked on the film, however. Jerome Robbins, not surprisingly, had the most involvement with the making of the film. During negotiations, Jerome Robbins insisted that he not only choreograph but direct the

[43]In *Mainly on Directing*, Laurents makes this statement when discussing the problems with the position of "Gee, Officer Krupke. The full statement follows, "In the uncinematic, mangled, and also anti-Puerto Rican movie, its [Krupke] position was shifted to the first act, which turned the gang even more into musical comedy chorus boys," 167.

[44]Jerome Robbins, cited in Stempel, "Musical Play," 136.

[45]Block, *Enchanted Evenings*, 246.

[46]Laird, 224.

adaptation. The Mirisch Corporation and United Artists agreed with the stipulation that Robert Wise, an experienced Hollywood director, co-direct. The studio arranged for Robbins to direct primarily the dances while the Wise handled the rest. However, Robbins was notoriously difficult to work with and the two directors often did not see eye to eye. Also known for being a perfectionist and extremely demanding, Robbins caused the film to fall behind schedule and over-budget. The actors later recalled that Robbins was "unable to say print it" and would constantly re-work dances or ask the dancers to repeat them.[47] Therefore, the studio ultimately fired Robbins, and Wise finished the film without him. Although he only completed directing a few numbers, including the Prologue and "Cool," Robbins's choreography was used throughout the film.

Co-director Robert Wise came to *West Side Story* with an impressive film career already, though no experience with film musicals as yet. He worked as an editor on two Orson Welles films, *Citizen Kane* (1941) and *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942). These credits resulted in Wise gaining a good reputation in Hollywood. Since the mid-40s, Wise had also directed over twenty-five films in a plethora of genres, including sci-fi film *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), war film *The Desert Rats* (1953), and historical epic *Helen of Troy* (1956). This wide breadth of experience and knowledge of Hollywood caused United Artists to insist that Wise help Robbins direct. When the studio fired Robbins, the more mild-mannered Wise finished the film. He did, however, bring Robbins back in to help with the editing and the two shared the Academy Award for Best Director.

[47]Beymer, et al. "West Side Memories," special features. *West Side Story*. DVD. Directed by Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins. (Santa Monica, CA: MGM Home Entertainment, 2003). The quote occurs about twenty-six minutes into the documentary, though discussion of Robbins's directing extends throughout the documentary.

The studio brought in screenwriter Ernest Lehman to adapt Laurents's tight book. Lehman had a number of high profile credits under his belt, including *Sabrina* (1954) and *North by Northwest* (1959). More importantly, Lehman had experience with adapting a stage musical to film with Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The King and I* (1956). Lehman was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay but lost out to Abby Mann for *Judgment at Nuremburg* (1961). Nonetheless, as I will discuss in the chapter on *The Sound of Music*, his work on *West Side Story* gained Lehman a reputation for excellence in adapting musical books for film.

While Bernstein contributed some new music for the extended Prologue, the studio hired Saul Chaplin, Johnny Green, Sid Ramin, and Irwin Kostal to supervise the music for the film. While attempting to preserve Bernstein's music, these men oversaw a number of changes to the music. Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal had previously collaborated closely with Bernstein in orchestrating the original Broadway score. Bernstein was an accomplished orchestrator; however, he found that due to the sheer volume of the instrumental music and time constraints, the show needed to bring in Broadway orchestrators. Nevertheless, Bernstein remained involved in the orchestrating process, even providing detailed sketches for Ramin and Kostal. With this level of involvement, Ramin and Kostal would have had a good knowledge of Bernstein's preferences when re-orchestrating for the film version. Ramin and Kostal honored much of the original intent in re-orchestrating and expanding for the film while also utilizing the extensive orchestral resources available in Hollywood.

In the original Broadway production, the collaborators decided to cast relatively unknown singers and dancers. Without a star, the original show focused on theatrical elements of the

musical as well as creating an "ensemble effect" coupled with a "youthful zest."[48] Hollywood, however, chose to cast the beautiful and famous Natalie Wood as Maria. By the 1950s, Wood had made the transition from child actress to Hollywood leading lady.[49] In 1956, Wood's performance in *Rebel without a Cause* (1955) was nominated for an Academy Award. With an Oscar nomination under her belt, the dramatic actress would be a large box-office draw for the film. The star's extremely public love life also brought several associations which made her a viable romantic lead. At the time, Wood had not only dated Elvis Presley but was married to Robert Wagner. Furthermore, the young actress had just finished filming *Splendor in the Grass* with heartthrob Warren Beatty.[50] Natalie Wood brought her fame as well as romantic and dramatic clout to the film.

Also noteworthy is the fact that Natalie Wood was not Hispanic. Born in California to parents originally from Russia, Wood had a background more in keeping with the Jets. Casting a Maria from the continental United States produced a myriad of problematic results. For instance, her portrayal of a newly arrived Puerto Rican with an inauthentic accent can be viewed as difficult at best and even racist. Similarly, Wood's make-up was a few shades darker than her natural olive skin tone.[51] Robbins had requested Rita Moreno to audition for the Broadway production, but "once the play was transformed into a Hollywood production, the likelihood that a Puerto Rican or Latina actress would be granted the lead role considerably diminished."[52] More specifically, it was less likely that a Puerto Rican lead would be cast opposite a white male lead in Hollywood, especially while the Production Code remained in place. Negrón-Muntaner

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[48]*Theatre Arts* review, "*West Side Story* Sets a New Standard for Stage Musicals," in *Readings on* West Side Story, ed. Mary E. Williams (San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2001), 113.

[49]Her most notable role as a child was Susan Walker in the Christmas classic *Miracle on 34th Street* (1947).

[50]It was this role, not *West Side Story*, that earned Wood her second Academy Award nomination.

[51]Notably, only George Chakiris performed in "brownface" for the film. The other Puerto Rican characters had slightly darker make-up than the white characters.

[52]Negrón-Muntaner, 91.

asserts that casting Natalie Wood as Maria also allowed "white audiences to enjoy the interracial seduction without its consequences… [Therefore,] the interracial exchange becomes a safe spectacle for white audiences."[53]

Casting Rita Moreno as the fiery Anita conjured certain associations. Born in Puerto Rico, Moreno moved to New York City at five years old. She had a steady career as an actress throughout the 1950s, often playing a Hispanic or "exotic" sexpot. In 1954, Moreno appeared on the cover of *Life* magazine with the caption "Rita Moreno: An Actresses' Catalog of Sex and Innocence," thus solidifying her sexy persona (Figure 1.1a). Also a trained singer and dancer, Moreno appeared in the films *Singin' in the Rain* (1952) and *The King and I* (1956). In Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The King and I*, she played the unfortunate Burmese slave girl Tuptim, a role that required a great deal of exotic appeal (Figure 1.1b). In 1961, Moreno brought not only her considerable talent to the film version of *West Side Story* but an exotic image that the filmmakers exploited. Moreno's costuming in the film plays on this image (Figure 1.1). Her dance costume exemplifies this tendency with a purple, low-cut dress complete with flounces and accessorized with a pair of large hoop earrings. A glamorous short hairdo, dark eyeliner, and darker cheek and lip colors further enhance Moreno's exoticism and sensuality. This image effectively conveys her Hispanic heritage and sex appeal. Despite the fact that she was actually Puerto Rican, Moreno had to wear a slightly darker shade of make-up than her natural tone and speak with a fake accent.

[53]Ibid., 92.

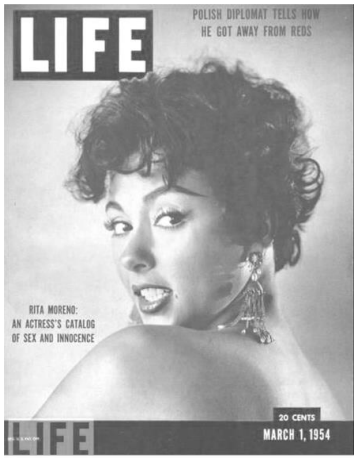

Figure 1.1. Images of Rita Moreno Prior to *West Side Story*: *a*, March, 1954 Cover of *Life*; *b*, Tuptim in *The King and I*.

Rita Moreno won the Academy Award for her portrayal of Anita, becoming the first Latina actress to receive the coveted Oscar. She also eventually became one of the few performers to win all four of the major entertainment awards (Oscar, Tony, Emmy, and Grammy).[54] Moreno was able to utilize and perhaps even transcend her initial image to become a respected performer with a long career.

The studio hired male actors for the lead roles with a varying amount of film and/or musical experience. Richard Beymer portrayed romantic lead Tony. Beymer had largely worked in television but appeared in a handful of films throughout the 1950s, including *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1959). Less high-profile but equally problematic is the fact that Beymer was a rural Iowan born to native American parents playing a second-generation Polish American. This casting indicates the Hollywood inattention to issues of ethnicity and implies a glossing of the Jets as white Americans. Russ Tamblyn, who played Riff, had more extensive film experience.

[54]Moreno won the Oscar in 1962 for *West Side Story*, the Grammy in 1972 for *The Electric Company Album*, the Tony in 1975 for Best Featured Actress in a Play – *The Ritz*, the Emmy in 1977 for Individual Performance in a Variety or Music Program – *The Muppet Show*, and another Emmy in 1978 for Outstanding Guest Actress on a Drama Series – *Out to Lunch*.

He even appeared as Gideon Pontipee in the film *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (1956), demonstrating his highly athletic dancing abilities. Finally, George Chakiris played Puerto Rican Bernardo. A dancer, Chakiris had been in numerous musicals on stage and film. His dancing credits on film include *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953), *Brigadoon* (1954) and, *White Christmas* (1954). Notably, he had originated the role of Riff in London. Born to Greek parents in Ohio, Chakiris's portrayal might be seen as just as inauthentic as Wood's with a poor accent and a mild exoticism stemming from his Greek heritage. However, Chakiris's performance was lauded, and he even won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor.

The filmmakers chose to use voice dubbing for the lead characters' singing throughout the film to varying extents. Dubbing non-singing actors with professional singers was a standard convention in Hollywood movie musicals, and *West Side Story* proved to be no exception. Of course, a number of issues arose out of the decision to use voice dubbers. Marni Nixon, a popular choice for Hollywood musicals, sang the role of Maria.[55] However, Wood believed that her voice would be heard in the movie all throughout filming. She sang Maria's songs, only to have the studio bring in Nixon without her knowledge. Jim Bryant sang the role of Tony since Richard Beymer was not a singer. While both Russ Tamblyn and Rita Moreno sang most of their songs, they were each dubbed for one song. Tucker Smith, who plays Ice in the film, provided Riff's voice in the "Jet Song." In a later interview, Tamblyn expressed regret that they chose to replace his original vocal track.[56] Although an accomplished singer, Moreno could not reach the low notes in "A Boy Like That;" therefore, Betty Wand, who sang for Leslie Caron in *Gigi* (1958), performed this song. Moreno lamented the necessity because she felt that Anita's face and voice

[55]Nixon sang for Deborah Kerr in *The King and I* (1956) as well as Audrey Hepburn in *My Fair Lady* (1964).
[56]Beymer, et al., "West Side Memories," Tamblyn's dicussion at thirty-eight minutes and fifty seconds.

do not match in the song.[57] Wand was not credited for her work and eventually sued for a portion of the soundtrack sales.[58] The prominent use of dubbing led to a disconnect between the bodies of the actors and the voices coming out of the characters. The concerns of Wood, Tamblyn, and Moreno all reflect the issues that this process engenders.

Fidelity

The film version of *West Side Story* maintains a strong connection with its original stage counterpart; nevertheless, the filmmakers made many alterations in the course of its development as a movie musical. While attempting to preserve Bernstein's music, Green, Chaplin, Ramin, and Kostal oversaw a number of changes to the score. Several of these alterations simply accommodate the change of medium. For instance, they omit music that Bernstein had composed for the scene changes necessary for a stage show.[59] Other modifications may have been more important in regards to the process of adaptation; the film musicians cut, expanded, rearranged, and even completely omitted sections of Bernstein's music throughout the work. These more significant revisions as well as adjustments made to the lyrics contain implications of differing conventions as well as a simple change of medium.

Ramin and Kostal attempted to honor Bernstein's score while expanding portions for the film while and making use the extensive orchestral resources available in Hollywood. They had access to orchestras of around sixty members for each of the musical numbers. Hollywood convention and budget allowed them to increase the number of instruments in some parts, particularly the string section. It also permitted the addition of instruments, such as the bass

[57]Ibid., Moreno's discussion at thirty-seven minutes.

[58]According to Jack Gottlieb, the lawsuit was settled out of court. Jack Gottlieb, *West Side Story* Fact Sheet. http://westsidestory.com/archives_factsheet.php (accessed September 2010).

[59]These omissions include from Act 1: Scene 2, 3a ("Something's Coming Chase"); Scene 5, 7a ("America to Drugstore"); Scene 6, 8a and b ("Cool Chase" and "Under Dialogue and Change of Scene"), and from Act II: Scene 2, 14a ("Change of Scene"); Scene 3, 15a ("Change of Scene").

guitar, harp, and violas. A small write-up in the *Los Angeles Sentinel* reveals that jazz musicians Shelley Manne (drums), Red Mitchell (bass), and Pete Condoli (trumpet) joined the studio orchestra. These virtuosos provided expert back-up in a few of the numbers, including the Prologue, "Dance at the Gym", and "Cool." The "Mambo" actually calls for a solo "screamer" trumpet to ad-lib in an extension of the piece.[60] My study of the film scores showed the process for working on the music for the film.[61] According to the dates marked on the film scores, Ramin and Kostal began by simply re-orchestrating the existing music. After an assessment of which pieces needed an expansion, they wrote and orchestrated new endings, lead-ins, and even inserts. The full orchestral scores include inserts for the "Blues," "Mambo," the "Rumble," and "Cool" that are designed to accommodate the extended choreography.[62]

In a musical driven so much by song and dance, the possibility for seemingly unnatural behaviors abound. More specifically, several of the dances may lose something in the translation to the screen. The use of location photography for many of the scenes, particularly the Prologue, not only necessitates changes in Robbins's choreography but affects how the original dance steps appear to the audience. Rita Moreno expressed her belief that the Dance at the Gym sequence, particularly the "Mambo," did not work as readily on screen as on the stage.[63] Indeed, the competitive edge created by the simultaneous performance of the gangs in the stage version does not quite translate to the screen. The camera guides the viewer's attention rather than the performers constantly competing for the audience's attention. This is especially apparent when the two groups form dancing circles in which to show off. When watching the film, the audience

[60]Ramin and Kostal used the term "screamer" for the higher, improvisatory trumpet part in the orchestral score.

[61]*West Side Story* Film Scores, Flat Box 704, Sid Ramin Papers, RBML, Columbia University.

[62]*West Side Story* Film Scores, Flat Box 705 and 267, Sid Ramin Papers, RBML, Columbia University.

[63]Beymer, et al., "West Side Memories." Twenty-eight minutes into the documentary, Moreno discusses this number as especially difficult because Robbins had just been fired. She notes it was "a difficult number to film because its such a *proscenium* number."

loses the ability to choose which dancers to watch and ultimately decide for themselves which are the more successful.

Wise and Robbins greatly expanded the Prologue for the film. Ramin and Kostal split the Prologue into ten distinct parts designed to connect directly with the carefully choreographed images. The sequence includes over three minutes worth of more music and encompasses roughly ten minutes of the film.[64] Bernstein and the film's music collaborators expand the Prologue by adding repeats of the Prologue's own music, interpolating elements from the "Cool fugue," as well as composing entirely new music. The expansion of this scene's music serves to enhance the increased tension between the Jets and Sharks in very specific ways.

The original Prologue music does not appear until roughly two minutes into the film. For the first two minutes, a series of aerial shots of New York City are accompanied by distant whistles, intermittent drum patterns, and commonplace car horns. The whistles sound a motive that summons the camera and audience from afar (Ex. 1.1).

Example 1.1. "Summoning" motive.[65]

West Side Story by Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim

Disembodied snaps enter from somewhere outside of the frame. Finally horns enter the texture, echoing the softer whistles. The "summoning" motive crescendos and succeeds in drawing the audience in, as the camera zooms into a basketball court. A cut and another zoom reveal the

[64] Dramatic pauses in the music, particularly when the Sharks and Jets encounter each other, account for the extra screen time.

[65] All musical examples transcribed from the orchestral score.

source of the previously non-diegetic snaps; Riff and the Jets lord over the neighborhood basketball court. Thus the musical collaborators use the "summoning" motive, which is based on the show's central Leitmotif and will come to signal the tension/hate between the two gangs, in order to introduce the setting and ultimately the self-styled American gang. The remainder of the Prologue outlines the perceived primacy of the Jets and the encroaching threat of the Sharks.

While the Prologue was greatly expanded for the film, the filmmakers chose to cut another dance section, the "Somewhere" ballet, entirely. Instead, it becomes a duet between Tony and Maria that represents the culmination of their romantic progression from love-at-first-sight to tragedy. In the stage production, a ballet sequence depicting the perfect, imaginary place in which Tony and Maria can be together dominates the scene. The film omits the ballet and the music that accompanies it. The song, transformed into the movie duet, is sung by an anonymous "Girl." Other than the fact that the solo becomes a duet, the core of the song remains otherwise untouched. The omission of the ballet results in a much more personal scene between Tony and Maria. Instead of seeking external solace, they turn to each other for comfort. Nevertheless, a set of conditions has been imposed upon their relationship. Although they dream of "somewhere" they can live in peace together, it has become clear that the place they dream of is not their reality.

Without the ballet, the large instrumental dance numbers remain in the realm of the gang rivalry. The Prologue sets up the expectation that the contention between the Jets and Sharks will develop through dance. The highly charged "Mambo" during the Dance at the Gym sequence continues this expectation. The "Cha-cha" and "Meeting Scene" do interrupt the competition; however, this proves to be more indicative of the milieu that the lovers find themselves entrenched in rather than a suggestion that they will be able to overcome it. Also, the stage clears

of most of the dancers and the instrumental forces are diminished during the more intimate scene. The instrumental "Rumble" marks the peak of hatred between the two gangs, which results in the deaths of Riff and Bernardo. Even the musical numbers "America" and "Cool," which involve a large amount of dancing, are marked by the rivalry in some way. The inclusion of the "Somewhere" ballet in the stage production provides for a dance space in which the tragedy can be overcome for a time, even if it is only a dream. The stage ballet posits a utopian world where different backgrounds do not matter and love can thrive in spite of insurmountable obstacles.

While fantasy ballet in the stage production follows directly in the footsteps of the Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals, the decision to omit the "Somewhere" ballet separates *West Side Story* from movie musicals in the 1950s that included ballet sequences, such as Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* (1955). The film's omission of the ballet may indicate a desire to differentiate this movie musical from the Rodgers and Hammerstein model. In a 2009 review in *Variety*, Todd McCarthy states his opinion that the ballet is "an odd and seemingly unnecessary homage to the Agnes de Mille tradition in what is already a dance-heavy show."[66] The "Somewhere ballet" would interrupt the tragic momentum of the film much more than the duet. Joseph Swain laments that "both choreography and stage directions paint the lovers' dream as a sort of paradise, for this is quite untrue to the tragic plot and denigrates the pathetic loss at the end."[67] The song does what the ballet cannot; it depicts Tony and Maria's desire to simply be left alone in their love. Swain points out that the song "speaks nothing of harmony between races or the perfect society…It is the musical expression for Tony and Maria's simpler dream."[68]

[66]Todd McCarthy, "'*West Side*' Screen Version Underrated," *Variety*, June 5, 2009.
[67]Swain, 253.
[68]Ibid., 253.

The film version of *West Side Story* reorders some of the songs in such a way that changes not only the overall structure of the musical numbers but the dramatic structure as well (see Table 1.1 for main changes and Appendix B for complete song order). In moving specific songs, the filmmakers build and sustain tension as well as maintain a tragic trajectory. The song order in the stage version allows for a certain amount of release after the Rumble, via "I Feel Pretty" and "Gee, Officer Krupke" (Table 1.1). The film moves these songs to before the tragic fight, eliminating their original function to relieve tension. In this section, I look at the ways in which the new order of songs impacts the characters and dramatic arc of the film.

Table 1.1. Song Order: "I Feel Pretty" and "Officer Krupke."

Stage:	Screen:
Rumble	
	Gee, Officer Krupke
Act 2	I Feel Pretty
I Feel Pretty	One Hand, One Heart
Somewhere Ballet Sequence	Tonight Ensemble
Gee, Officer Krupke	Rumble

The reordering of songs impacts the audience's experience of the progression of the relationship between Tony and Maria (Table 1.2). In the stage version, the Balcony Scene occurs directly after Tony sings "Maria." The film, however, delays the subsequent meeting by interchanging this scene with the showstopper "America," which reminds the audience of the conflict and gives the Sharks a voice. Therefore, the audience must wait to see further development of the star-crossed lovers' relationship. The order in the stage production focuses more on Tony and Maria's relationship. Immediately after Tony sings of his infatuation, his desires are fulfilled. The film delays Tony's gratification, and by extension that of the audience. After the Rumble, the "Somewhere" duet is the next substantial musical number. The recent

deaths of Tony's best friend and Maria's brother haunt the more intimate version of this scene. The tragedy is highlighted without "I Feel Pretty" as a buffer.

Table 1.2. Song Order: Balcony Scene and "America."

Stage:	Screen:
Dance at the Gym Sequence	Dance at the Gym Sequence
Maria	Maria
Balcony Scene (Tonight Duet)	America
America	Balcony Scene (Tonight Duet)

Furthermore, the filmmakers' decision to move the position of "I Feel Pretty" impacts how the audience views Maria and experiences the tragedy (Table 1.1). In the stage production, "I Feel Pretty" opens the second act, after the Rumble. Blissfully unaware of Bernardo's death at the hand of Tony, this placement shuts Maria "out of the world in which the 'real' and serious drama unfolds."[69] Her character, therefore, seems detached from the tragic plot and even superficial at this point. The film moves this lighter song to before the Rumble, and even before the young lovers' mock marriage. Therefore, the excitement expressed through the song is not disappointed but fulfilled. The new position also maintains the tragic trajectory of the plot. In the place of "I Feel Pretty," Maria waits for Tony on the roof of her settlement house after the Rumble. She does not sing but dances simple, balletic steps to the "Cha-cha" in long shot. Although the music and dance becomes increasingly exultant, Maria does not focus on her looks but remembers her meeting with Tony. Dramatic irony informs both versions. However, the film shortens the audience's anticipation as well as removing an element of tragic irony from "I Feel Pretty."

One of the most discussed changes made for the film was the decision to switch the comedic "Gee, Officer Krupke" with "Cool" (Appendix B). A number of people, including the

[69]Wells, 162.

original collaborators, have expressed their opinion in regards to the switch. In the interviews that accompany the DVD special edition, Stephen Sondheim asserts that he preferred "Krupke" before the Rumble, as in the film, because it was unrealistic to have a comedic number after the deaths of Riff and Bernardo.[70] However, he has been documented as retracting his original opinion after seeing the film, stating that the song "works wonderfully in act II on the basis of its 'theatrical truth' rather than its 'literal truth.'"[71] Arthur Laurents, who did not work on the film, cites the switch as one of the reasons that the film is an "uncinematic, mangled" version of the story.[72]

No matter the opinion, the decision to change the order of the two songs alters how the audience experiences the narrative. In the stage production, "Gee, Officer Krupke" offers a respite from the tragedy coupled with biting social commentary. As Oja affirms, the song "simultaneously delivers a searing social indictment and lightens up the mood after the murders of Bernardo and Riff."[73] The film presents no such respite; instead, inserting "Cool" heightens the tensions that lead to yet another death. The alteration (along with moving "I Feel Pretty" to before the Rumble) in fact manipulates the audience to experience the tragedy on a different level. Sondheim asserted that *West Side Story* was a theatre piece "about theatre."[74] The placement of "Krupke" in the original adheres to this viewpoint. Inserting a vaudeville-inspired number after the Rumble employs the typical device of comic relief used in musical comedy. Perceived as a more realistic medium, the filmmakers may have considered this theatrical device inappropriate for cinema. The film, therefore, focuses on the tragedy of the story. The convention

[70] Beymer, et al.,"West Side Memories," Sondheim discusses this point at about twenty-three minutes.
[71]Qtd. in Block, *Enchanted Evenings*, 254.
[72]Laurents, 167.
[73]Oja, 23.
[74]Beymer, et al., "West Side Memories," quote at two minutes and thirty seconds.

of comic relief would seem even further out of place since Wise wanted to convey an impending impression of doom.[75] The use of "Cool" in its place continues the tensions that both led up to the Rumble and are sustained by the deaths of the gang leaders.

Switching "Krupke" and "Cool" also produces an interesting side effect. It resulted in the creation of the character appropriately named Ice as well as the reduction of Action's character. Ice, played by Tucker Smith, replaces the character Diesel from the Broadway production, and much of his character draws from the original. In the beginning, the character does not deviate much from Diesel's lines and even takes on his role as the initial fighter for the Rumble. The change in his character comes about subtly and can first be perceived in "Gee, Officer Krupke." Unlike Diesel, Ice does not participate in the antics of the rest of the gang. He stands aside during this comic song, simply watching the role play in which the others engage. This subtle display of restraint alludes to the more serious role that Ice will assume after the death of Riff. Of course, Ice does not come into his own as a character until the song "Cool." Conversely, Action loses his solo opportunity as the front man for "Krupke." Since Riff has not yet died and remains the leader of the Jets, he initiates the number. The hot-headed Action also would not have been an appropriate choice to lead "Cool." Therefore, the creation of a "cool" character became necessary.

"Gee, Officer Krupke" does not sustain any major musical alterations in the film; however, examining the performance does provide interesting insight into the filmmakers' approach. In its new position, "Gee, Officer Krupke" becomes a comic vehicle for Russ Tamblyn. Unlike in the "Jet Song," Tamblyn did his own singing for this song.[76] Known primarily for his athletic dancing, Tamblyn presents one of the final moments of levity in the

[75]Gottlieb, westsidestory.com.
[76]Tucker Smith ("Ice") sang Riff's part in the "Jet Song" only.

film. The song's lyrics change at times in order to present a commentary at least lacking in swear words. For instance, any mention of drugs in the song goes untouched – Riff sings of "junkies," "drunks," and "marijuana." However, the swear words present in one verse must be removed. In the stage production the lyrics read: "My father is a bastard, My ma's an S.O.B. My grandpa's always plastered, My grandma pushes tea." In the film this line becomes: "My daddy beats my mommy, My mommy clobbers me. My grandpa is a commie, My grandma pushes tea." Side-by-side comparison of these lines reveals that the language, not the content, of this song required editing. By the 1950s, the Code allowed regulated use of language such as hell and damn but not many other vulgar words or phrases. Thomas Doherty also explains that the ban on illegal drugs had been lifted, though "the restrictions on crime scenarios were somewhat tightened."[77] Tellingly, a description of domestic abuse replaces the epithets applied to parents. Perhaps the role of this song as a vehicle for social commentary, condemning and not condoning these behaviors, saved it from further censorship. *West Side Story* came at the end of the Production Code era, at a time when films began to explore previously banned subjects more and more. Therefore, cursory language changes would conform to the Code during a tumultuous time at the end of Classical Hollywood's heyday.

Like "Krupke," the music in "Cool" is not substantially different. Robbins directed this musical scene before the studio fired him, and several of the dancers recall this number as the most grueling in the entire film.[78] Characteristically, Robbins strove for perfection not only from the dancers' steps but in highlighting the movement through cinematography. In the film, "Cool" takes place in an empty garage. The few cars present serve to light the Jets as they dance out

[77]Thomas Doherty, *Hollywood's Censor: Joseph I. Breen and The Production Code Administration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 324.

[78]Beymer, et al.,"West Side Memories." An extended discussion of "Cool" begins at about twenty-seven minutes.

their frustrations. The camera constantly changes position, sometimes showing the dance as a whole while only focusing on certain characters or body parts at others. The editing intensifies the emotional impact. For example, a number of cuts and quick pans highlight the section when the characters punctuate the music with exclamations of "Crazy," Cool," and "Go!" Like the stage production, the focus is on Robbins's choreography. In the film, however, the camera guides the audience to the particular moves or characters that should be followed as well as the moments in which they should feel the tensest.

Changes made for the film *West Side Story* reflected the change in medium, from stage to cinema. In many ways, the filmmakers catered to Hollywood conventions, the mass audience of cinema, and the declining Production Code. Robbins and Wise, along with Ramin and Kostal, also made a number of large order alterations that affected the film version in meaningful ways. The choice to expand the Prologue, omit the "Somewhere" ballet, and reorder several songs impacts the audience's experience of the social commentary and tragic romance. Cinematic technique enhances these changes, exploring the possibilities of film. As such, *West Side Story* transforms from a singularly theatrical work into a cinematic entity – a transformation that influences the ethnic and gender representation of the characters as well.

Women: Ethnicity and Gender Roles

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, the place of women in American society was undergoing significant changes in the 1950s and sixties. The depiction of the women characters in the film version of *West Side* Story attest to the situation. The film separates along both ethnic and gender lines. Thus, the various representations of femininity has as much to say about ethnicity as it does gender. As Oja maintains, "even though the film and show aimed to feature Puerto Ricans as people, rather than as exotic flavouring, they still traded on troubling

essentialisms."[79] The images of Maria and Anita in particular reinforce stereotypes found in mid-twentieth century film. The cinematography works together with dialogue, costuming, and songs to portray Maria as naively attractive. On the other hand, Anita emerges as a feisty, sexy woman. The depiction of the two lead female characters corresponds with popular stereotypes (innocent virgin and spitfire) of women in film. My analysis will explore how cinematic techniques combine with music and other elements, including changes in dialogue made by screenwriter Ernest Lehman, in ways that both utilize and challenge these stereotypes as applied to Maria and Anita, as well as the other women in the film.

The fact that the creators of *West Side Story* were all homosexual men must be acknowledged. Scholars such as Frances Negrón-Muntaner and Elizabeth A. Wells introduce elements of a queer reading in their respective works. Wells calls *West Side Story* "a glorious celebration of men."[80] The role of dance and sheer screen time that the two gangs receive may be interpreted to recognize the presence of gay male spectator. In fact, *West Side Story* differs from many mid-century musicals where men are "defined in relation to women; they are secondary. Women sing more (and more interesting) songs; they take up more stage space."[81] The opposite seems to be the case in this musical; even the lead female characters are defined in relation to the men. This results in a marginal space for women within the stage production, and subsequent film, that becomes an important aspect when exploring their representation. And yet I contend that the camera assumes or perhaps guides the spectator towards the gaze of the heterosexual male as theorized by Laura Mulvey.[82]

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[79]Oja, 25.

[80]Wells, 143.

[81]Stacy Wolf, *A Problem Like Maria: Gender and Sexuality in the American Musical* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 41.

[82]Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in *Feminism and Film Theory*, ed. Constance Penley (New York: Routledge, 1988), 57-68.

The issue of gender is intimately tied to race in this musical. Jerome Robbins, Leonard Bernstein, Arthur Laurents, and Stephen Sondheim highlighted the difference between the Puerto Rican Sharks and the white "American" Jets in their production. Like their male counterparts, which I have discussed elsewhere, the female characters are defined primarily by their ethnicity.[83] The two leading female characters are Puerto Rican, and their femininity is often identified at least in part in terms of their ethnicity. Their speech, music, dance, and even dress signify them as distinctly Puerto Rican women, even as Maria and especially Anita express the desire to assimilate into "American" society. Unlike the male gang members, the girls from different ethnic backgrounds rarely, if ever, interact. Instead, the women perform according to (or against) the prescribed views of their gender within their particular societies. This chapter will therefore treat the film's representations of the women in *West Side Story* in relation to their identity as Puerto Rican or white "Americans."

Defining Maria Through Love and Beauty

Like Juliet in Shakespeare's play, Maria enters only after the audience has become familiar with her future love, Tony, in the song "Something's Coming." Defined in relation to Tony in both the stage and film, Wells explores how Maria was initially a much stronger character. She draws from correspondence and earlier drafts of the musical for her analysis.[84] From her first appearance, Maria is depicted as the embodiment of virginal purity. In the film, the scene opens with a close-up on Maria's face. The entire exposition of Maria's character centers around the alterations of her old communion dress, which is white, for the forthcoming dance (Figure 1.2a and b). Maria first implores her confidante Anita to lower the neckline. When

[83]Woller, 2010.
[84]Wells, 155-60.

the more experienced woman refuses, Maria proceeds to beg her to dye it red.[85] Once again Anita denies the younger girl, and Maria is destined to meet her love in white. Negrón-Muntaner posits that the emphasis on white stresses not only Maria's sexual purity but that she is still "untouched by American culture and uncontaminated by racism."[86] Therefore, this short scene sets up Maria as a paradigm of youthful innocence.

The setting of this scene takes place within the specifically female space of a bridal shop. The film's dialogue makes explicit the fact that the shop is within the feminine sphere when Bernardo and Chino arrive. This brief dialogue indicates that the shop is for women only, making it uncomfortable for men to enter. A tiny change from the stage production highlights this (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3. Bridal Shop Dialogue in Original Script vs. Film.

Original Script:	Film Version:
Maria: Come in, Chino. Do not be afraid.	Maria: Come in, Chino. Do not be afraid.
Chino: But this is a shop for ladies.	Chino: But this is a shop for ladies.
Bernardo: Our ladies.	Anita: We won't bite you 'til we know you better.

In the stage version, Bernardo counters Chino's hesitance with the possessive response "Our ladies." The film's slight change removes Bernardo's implication that he can navigate the women's space because these women belong to him. Instead, Anita asserts her authority in a sassy, playful manner with a hint of sexual tension by teasing Chino with the statement, "We

[85]I will discuss this scene later in the chapter, focusing on the important aspects of Anita's character that comes out of her introduction.

[86]Negrón-Muntaner, 94.

won't bite you 'til we know you better." Thus established as a space ruled by women, the bridal shop becomes one of the primary settings that Maria can safely occupy without Tony.

Figure 1.2. Anita vs. Maria in the Bridal Shop: *a,* Maria in White Dress, *b,* Bernardo Kisses Sister, *c,* Mischievous Anita; *d,* Bernardo Kisses Anita. Screen Captures.

After the bridal shop scene, Maria's musical self seems to exist only in relation to Tony. Even "I Feel Pretty," the first song that Maria sings without Tony, refers directly to her love for him. Surrounded by women in the bridal shop, Maria sings without her lover for the first time. The scene opens with Maria in mid-shot, trying on various hats in the mirror. As the dialogue between Maria, Rosalia, and Consuelo begins, the love struck Maria continues to "doll" herself up. The ensuing song, "I Feel Pretty," provides an extension of the visual focus on looks. While Negrón-Muntaner posits that "Maria only feels pretty when a white man, Tony, sees her," Natalie Wood's performance in the film suggests that Maria feels pretty as soon as she puts on her party dress.[87] Nevertheless, Maria's happiness manifests as a feeling of prettiness, and the

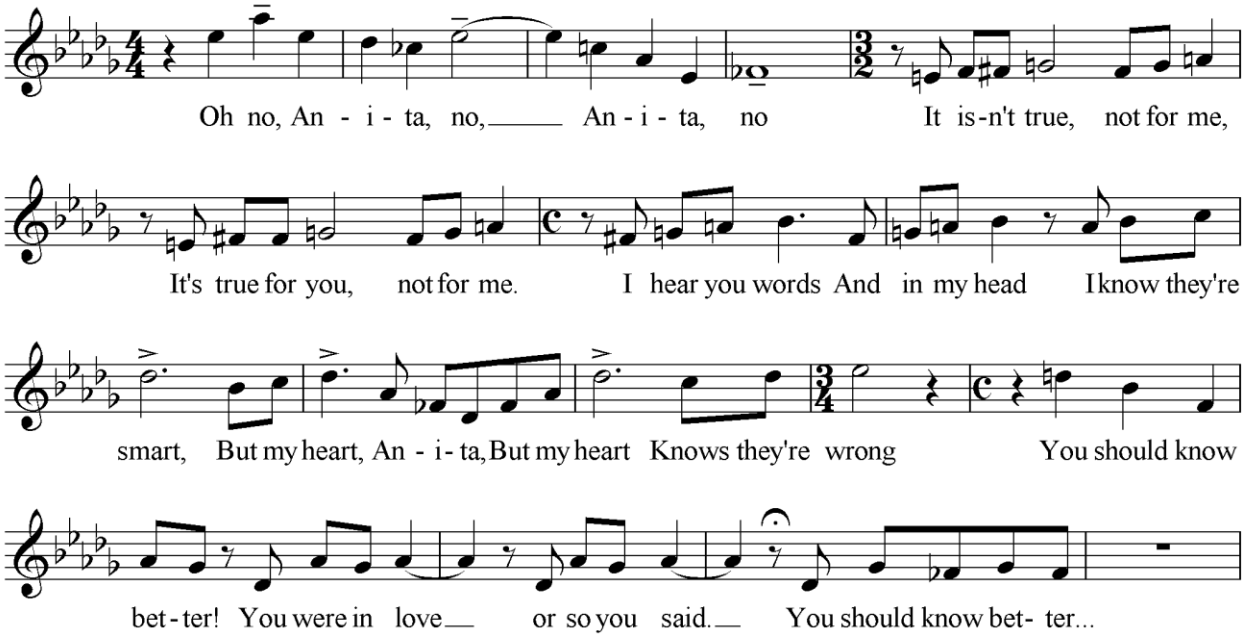
[87]Negrón-Muntaner, 95.

cause of her happiness is not only a man but a white "American" man. Her exultation in Tony's love reflects her ultimate goal to become Americanized. The Spanish guitar and use of the tambourine in the music keep Maria within the realm of the "Hispanic." However, the music notably takes on a more explicit "Spanish" sound when the other girls sing. This is exemplified by the addition of castanets and highlighted in the film when Maria performs a pseudo-flamenco style dance. Despite the marginally "Hispanic" sounding music, the lyrics directly reflect Maria's desire to be a "young lady of America." Sondheim included lyrics about Miss America that imply this position would be "the highest pinnacle that she could reach."[88]

Maria's other solo song, "I Have a Love," follows Anita's angry and passionate "A Boy Like That." Stacy Wolf analyzes this song in detail, claiming that although the song is ostensibly about a man, "the song's performance elides the man and concerns only these two women… The song develops an emotional shift, a change brought about by one woman's influence on another."[89] The camera focuses on a close-up of Maria as she interjects "Oh no, Anita no!" Here, the film makes a significant cut; Ramin and Kostal remove the duet between Anita and Maria that links their songs, morphing Anita's diatribe into Maria's love song. Interestingly, this cut does not appear in the film scores at Columbia University.[90] Ramin and Kostal simply re-orchestrated the entire song, and the decision to cut the duet seems to have come later.

[88]Wells, 157.
[89]Wolf, *Changed for Good*, 49.
[90]"A Boy Like That/I Have a Love," *West Side Story* Film Scores, Flat Box 704, Sid Ramin Papers, RBML, Columbia University.

Example 1.2. Maria's Transition from "A Boy Like That" to "I Have a Love."[91]



West Side Story by Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim

In the film, Maria sings a brief section that provides a transition into "I Have a Love" (Example 1.2), suggesting that love quickly trumps all else. Maria defines herself as Tony's lover to Anita. Although the audience has not seen her as an independent woman throughout the entire movie, Maria explicitly admits that she is no longer just herself. Throughout the song, the camera cuts between the two grief-stricken women. The shots catch both Maria's emotion and Anita's reactions. Significantly, the light falls on Maria's face as she sings of her devotion. The force of that love convinces Anita, and they finish the love song together.

Cinematic technique helps to define the character of Maria in relation to her lover. During love scenes, the two most often share the frame (frequently in a close embrace). In these

[91]The cut encompasses the last beat of measure 45 through the first beat of 62.

scenes, the camera also appropriates the lovers' adoring gazes. Wise uses a mixture of close-up counter shots and mid-shots with Tony and Maria looking at one another rapturously (Figure 1.4c and 1.4d). The "Tonight" duet offers an example of how the camera guides the audience to see Maria through Tony's eyes (Figure 1.3). As each begins to sing their verse, a close-up is used on the other's face in order to portray the reaction before sharing the frame. The camera lingers on close-ups, particularly those in which Tony marvels at Maria's beauty (Figure 1.3a). Therefore, Tony and the camera both guide the audience to see Maria as most beautiful during the moments she appears most in love.

Figure 1.3. Images of Maria During the "Tonight" Duet: *a*, Close-Up; *b*, Tony's Point-of-View. Screen Captures.

While striking, close shots are not the only means by which the camera assumes Tony's point of view. The end of the same duet shows Maria at the top of the fire escape (Figure 1.3b). During the dialogue before the final verse, the space is used to separate Tony and Maria. Tony has descended the fire escape to leave, and the two finish their conversation looking through the stairs or railing. Maria, in particular, looks trapped as she peers at Tony through the prison-like bars. The couple sings the last verse apart as Tony gazes up at Maria from the ground level. During the final utterance of "tonight," it first cuts to his point of view, then to hers. A repetition of the final chord further prolongs the moment. Only heard once in the original score, this chord sounds three times in the film and allows the camera to return to and linger on the image of

Natalie Wood. The cinematography enhances the characterization inherent in Maria's music: she exists in the film as an extension of the relationship with Tony.

Other intimate scenes and musical numbers between Maria and Tony further reinforce the beauty of Natalie Wood as Maria. The "Meeting Scene" occurs directly after the "Cha-Cha," during which Tony and Maria dance accompanied by three other couples. The "Cha-cha" music remains entirely intact. However, an interesting change of dialogue occurs in the course of the scene (Table 1.4).

Table 1.4. Maria and Tony's Meeting.

Stage version:	Film version:
Maria: My hands are so cold. *(He takes them in his)* Yours, too. *(He moves her hands to his face)* So warm. Tony: Yours, too. Maria: But of course. They are the same.	Maria: My hands are cold. *(He takes them in his)* Yours, too. *(Tony moves her hands to his face)* So warm. Tony: So beautiful. Maria: Beautiful.

The dialogue in the original script simultaneously confronts and dismisses the issue of ethnicity in the minds of Tony and Maria. Maria's declaration that "they are the same" relates to the audience that this love transcends their difference while simultaneously foreshadowing "One Hand, One Heart." The film suggestively sidesteps this declaration and the allusion with a change of dialogue. While rapturously looking at Maria, Tony simply says "So beautiful." This slight change makes the cold hands/warm face exchange much more trivial. The film's dialogue

emphasizes Tony's gaze during the "Meeting Scene." Not only does the dialogue fail to address their ethnicity but emphasizes the visual aspects of their attraction, highlighted by the cinematography. The moment soon ends as the world slowly returns. The Promenade music slowly encroaches on their private world and people return to the frame. Glad Hand blows the whistle, and Tony and Maria kiss as the lights come back up.

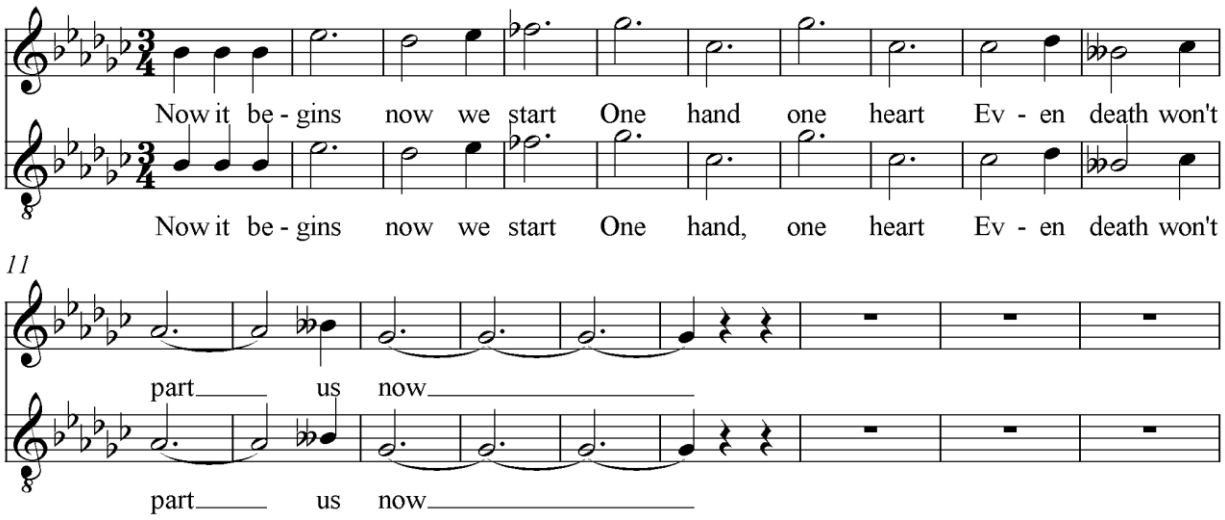
Cinematic techniques highlight the couple's relationship as it progresses from ecstatic meeting to tragic ending. Counter shots, like those used in the "Balcony Scene," establish that Tony and Maria only have eyes for each other. They are prominently used during the couple's first meeting and "One Hand, One Heart" as well as during the "Tonight" duet. These types of shots also serve to direct the audience's gaze at the beauty of Natalie Wood as she visually expresses her love for Tony. In the case of the "Meeting Scene" in particular, counter shots also reduce the audience's ability to focus on the other characters and emphasizes the love relationship over community. Once Tony and Maria become aware of each other's presence, their surroundings are extremely out of focus and the "Mambo" music sounds increasingly far away, creating the impression that the lovers are entering their own private world (Figure 1.4 and 1.5). It appears as though the cinematographer used the common technique of applying Vaseline to the lens to create the blurring effect. The cinematographer uses this technique once again during the "Tonight" duet as Tony and Maria sing in unison and look out into the distance (Figure 1.5d). Repeating this technique implies that the world of the two lovers does not include reality. Rather they enter their own private world. In fact, this song proves to be the point at which the lovers' relationship is most secure. They readily confirm their love, and the real world has yet to disrupt their obvious bliss.

Figure 1.4. Representative Counter Shots of Tony and Maria: *a,* Love at First Sight For Maria; *b,* Love At First Sight for Tony; *c*, Tony in "Tonight;" *d*, Maria in "Tonight;" *e,* Tony in "One Hand, One Heart;" *f*, Maria in "One Hand." Screen Captures.

Figure 1.5. Blurred Surroundings Indicating the Lovers' Private World. Screen Captures.

In the duets, "One Hand, One Heart" and "Somewhere," the effects of the outside world on Tony and Maria's relationship become increasingly apparent. The song "One Hand, One Heart" emphasizes the couple's progression as they proclaim their fidelity and unity. Like the "Tonight" duet, the music of this song does not sustain major alterations. A thirty-bar cut, from 91-129, does shorten the song (Example 1.3). The purpose of the cut seems to be to avoid repetition. However, a side effect of this economy is to vocally separate Tony and Maria. The film removes the unison section and moves straight into the ending where the hitherto repeated text is sung in harmony.

Example 1.3. Cut Duet from "One Hand, One Heart," mm. 91-106.



West Side Story by Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim

Significantly, the filmmakers do not utilize the same techniques during "One Hand, One Heart" as in previous scenes between these characters. Most notable is the decision to keep Tony and Maria's surroundings in focus throughout both the dialogue and music. Despite the fact that they are playacting, seemingly still in a world of their own making, the camera keeps the real world in focus. The *mise-en-scène* is arranged to look like a church particularly when the camera zooms out to include a small window above the shop (Figure 1.6). The lighting also indicates a church with a heavenly glow descending from the ceiling. However, the presence of dummies makes the space always recognizable as a dress shop. The song begins in a mid-shot that encompasses the church-like space as Tony sings. As the song progresses, the camera cuts in closer to capture Tony and Maria lovingly staring at one another in a series of counter shots. Here, the camera does not appropriate the characters' gaze but focuses on the adoring looks that

they give (Figure 1.4e and 1.4f). The camera's position reflects the closeness that the young lovers feel during their performance of marriage.

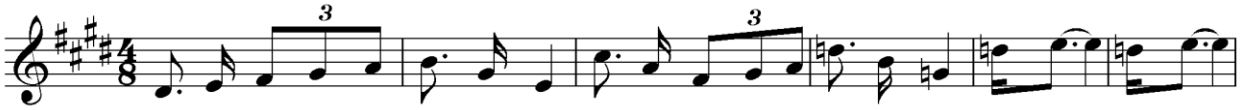
Figure 1.6. Dress Shop as a Church.

"Somewhere" represents the culmination of Tony and Maria's musical progression. Color dominates the *mise-en-scène* during this song. Stained glass in Maria's room casts the entire set in bright red and blue (Figure 1.7). Red tint is used throughout the film to signify the animosity and violence of the gangs. Towards the beginning of the duet, the red-tinted wall is behind Tony while Maria stands in front of a blue portion (Figure 1.7b). This construction highlights the tragedy that has just befallen. The use of these colors can also be viewed as an ironic reference to America as the tragedy of the circumstances more closely affects the young couple. American prejudice now touches Tony and the formerly innocent Maria. A close-up shot of the two embracing takes up the frame as Tony begins the duet. After Maria has had her say, the camera cuts to mid-shot from a position behind the bed frame. The bars of the frame separate the Tony and Maria, and each appears to occupy a separate box (Figure 1.7b.). However, they soon stand up, escaping the bed frame, in order to come together again visually as they sing in unison. The song ends with a close-up of the lovers kissing and collapsing together, leaving only the red and blue behind them (Figure 1.7c).

Figure 1.7. "Somewhere."

As mentioned in a previous section, the change from external ballet to a duet makes this scene much more personal. It becomes a highpoint in the relationship between Tony and Maria as well as serving to give the lead characters more concentrated screen time. In fact, the alteration provides another vehicle for the dramatic powers of the film's star, Natalie Wood. Despite the fact that Maria's singing voice was dubbed, another song allowed Wood more close-ups and the opportunity to interact with her leading man. All of these elements make the moment of Tony's death more powerful when Maria sings a fragment of "Somewhere" in an attempt to sustain him (Example 1.4). At this moment, she refers not to an abstract, utopian place but their own dreams of living together in peace. It also gives Maria a tender, final interaction with Tony, enhanced by a shot of her emotional singing followed by a counter shot of Tony's reaction and subsequent death.

Example 1.4. Fragment of "Somewhere" from Tony's death.



For such a central character, Maria maintains a relatively marginal role. Not until she meets and falls in love with Tony does Maria sing. Significantly, Sondheim and Bernstein believed that the show needed "a strong song for Tony earlier since he had none until 'Maria,' which was a love song. We had to have more delineation of him as a character."[92] The composer and lyricist obviously felt no such qualms about Maria's short, introductory scene without any such song. In fact, the first song that Maria sings is the duet "Tonight." The audience does not witness a solo song from Maria until much later in the show with "I Feel Pretty." Maria gained her voice when she met Tony and subsequently lost it with his death. Although Bernstein tried to write an aria for Maria's final speech, the music never came. Scott Miller attributes the difficulties in composing for this scene to "the fact that Maria is dead inside; she can't sing because Tony was her music."[93] Unlike her male counterpart, Maria can neither sing before nor after the love relationship. She is completely defined by it while he maintains a degree of autonomy.

In lieu of a final aria, Maria delivers a powerful speech after the death of Tony. In this scene, the virginal white dress has been replaced by a red one. However, this costume does not feature the sexy, low-cut style that Maria had in mind for her party dress. The dress is form fitting with a high neckline, and the message is clear: Maria has lost her innocence and is now a woman. American culture has affected her, though not in the positive way she had hoped. The cinematography heightens the emotional power of this scene. It begins in mid shot when Maria takes the gun from Chino. She places the blame entirely on the gangs with the lines, "All of you. You all killed him and my brother… not with bullets and guns. With hate." In the original script

[92]Qtd in Craig Zadan, "The Creative Process Behind *West Side Story*," in *Readings on* West Side Story, ed. Mary E. Williams (San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2001), 51.

[93]Scott Miller, "An Examination of *West Side Story's* Plot and Musical Motifs," in *Readings on* West Side Story, ed. Mary E. Williams(San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2001), 91.

Maria shares the blame, stating "We all killed him." In her naïveté, Maria sent Tony to the Rumble in order to stop it. His presence instead causes the fight to escalate rather than dissipate. Scott Miller posits that Maria's use of "we" also has larger societal implications. He asks "what kind of world have we made in which teenagers carry guns and knives, in which they are taught by the adults around them to hate others?"[94] The camera cuts in closer to Maria on the line "with hate." There is a cut to long shot as she contemplates killing as many as possible. Maria walks over to Ice and the camera pans, leaving Maria towards the bottom right of the frame. The *mise-en-scène* appears slightly askew, mirroring Maria's emotions. The underscoring begins again as she falls to the ground sobbing. With "Somewhere" in the background, Maria runs to Tony and with only imploring looks brings members of each gang together to carry him away. Despite her tragic loss, "Maria gains agency as a result of losing both her lover and brother."[95] She thus gains a degree of independence and authority as yet unknown to her and is able, if only for a moment, to stop the antagonism between the two gangs.

Sexuality and Agency in Anita's Characterization

Another Puerto Rican character, Anita, takes her place as the film's secondary female lead. As both Maria's confidante and Bernardo's girlfriend, Anita shows herself to be an almost motherly influence as well as more sexually experienced than her innocent friend. The film introduces the two female leads simultaneously in the dress shop, setting them up as foils to one another (Figure 1.2). Elements of Anita's character surface in this short introductory scene. In contrast with the virginal Maria, Anita immediately emerges as sexy, strong, and demanding. Her dialogue includes sexual innuendo as she teasingly warns Maria about what can happen with boys.

[94]Ibid., 92.
[95]Negrón-Muntaner, 100.

Maria: When I look at Chino, nothing happens.

Anita: What do you expect to happen?

Maria: I don't know: something. What happens when you look at 'Nardo?

Anita: It's when I don't look that it happens.

This brief exchange highlights both Maria's naïveté and Anita's knowledge. Once Bernardo enters, Anita demands both his praise and attention (Figure 1.2d). Although she clearly asserts herself as a sexual being, Anita is by no means a passive female existing purely for male pleasure. In fact, throughout most of the film, she actively gains agency from her sensuality. Moreover, Anita plainly enjoys her interludes with Bernardo. Later in the show, she eagerly anticipates a meeting with Bernardo, exclaiming "after a fight, that brother of yours is so healthy!" to Maria. Moreno's portrayal both plays into the typical representation of women as sexual object (particularly that of the "Hispanic spitfire") as well as seeking to subvert it through key displays of strength.

In a musical where not just song but dance connotes power, Anita's dancing abilities become particularly significant, and the Dance at the Gym provides the best and earliest example. Once the "Mambo" begins in earnest, Moreno soon demonstrates her considerable talent. The Puerto Ricans dance steps are stereotypically more suggestive than the white girls, as the Jets counter the Puerto Ricans' hip thrusts with a head bob. Nevertheless, the dance highlights Anita. The dance becomes competitive, and the two groups split into semi-circles featuring the gang leaders and their girls. Unlike any woman on the Jets side, Anita is an equal dance partner with Bernardo. In fact, the steps often emphasize her rather than Bernardo as the star dancer (Figure 1.8a).

Anita represents the strongest female character in *West Side Story*. Interestingly, she attributes her independent behavior to living in the continental United States. Some key lines make this association explicit. For instance, she exclaims that Maria can dance with whomever she likes because "girls here are free to have fun. She is in America now." And after the number "America" (discussed below), a brief exchange between Anita and Bernardo reaffirms this belief.

Anita: I am an American girl now. I don't wait.

Bernardo: Back home women know their place.

Clearly, both equate being in America with strong women. Ironically, this does not mesh with the reality of the position of "American" girls in the film. In fact, the opposite seems to be true, particularly in the case of Anita. By challenging Bernardo's "sexist expectations," Anita represents "women's resistance to the patriarchal structures of control."[96] The Jet girls, with the significant exception of the tomboy Anybodys, make no such challenge. At the same time, Anita's behavior is playful. She can use her appeal in order to speak her mind, though perhaps never really crossing the line. Her sassiness can even be seen as desirable because it is always connected with her sexuality. She keeps Bernardo on his toes, sometimes annoying him slightly but remains privy to his outside world. Though he would not allow her accompany him to any gang related activities, he obviously confides in her.

In the film, the song and dance number "America" emphasizes the characterization of Anita as a strong and independent woman. It also represents one of the most noticeably altered musical sections in the film. Unlike in the stage version, the boys do not leave the girls but join in the song. This significant revision not only results in the reduction of the character Rosalia but changes the dynamics in the song. Dash feels that the in the film "the song loses its kick; no

[96]Smith, 51.

longer a debate between women, it became a contest between men and women."[97] Indeed, "America" becomes a continuation of the previous argument between the sexes. Anita argues with and even mocks Bernardo but their squabbles are always tinged with sexual tension. The original music largely remains intact. The biggest changes are the omission of Rosalia's nostalgic melody and the expansion of the instrumental music at the end (accomplished by repetition). Obviously, the addition of the men incorporates another vocal dimension as the girls and boys alternately sing the lines. The lyrics are also significantly altered for the film, adding a level of social commentary less present in the original script. Alberto Sandoval points out that "although Bernardo discredits and demythifies [sic] Anita's exaltation of the 'American Dream,' his comments are subordinated and silenced."[98] Anita's power, drawn in part from her pro-U.S.A. stance, becomes more explicit with the addition of the men.

The addition of the boys to "America" also adds a competitive edge that plays out especially through dance. The male and female dancers alternately dance in a manner that mirrors their respective viewpoints. For example, Bernardo and his Sharks mimic fighting through dance. Anita and the other girls put on a show for their boyfriends while simultaneously challenging them. Through editing, the camera gives primacy to each gender in turn. Editing and solo dancing also highlight Anita as both a talented dancer and sensual woman (Figure 1.8b). After each separately vying for the space, the boys and girls all finally dance together. The music has been slightly extended here to accommodate the couples ending the number together. Tellingly, the song ends with the couples laughing and embracing as they leave the roof.

[97]Dash, 103.

[98]Alberto Sandoval, "*West Side Story*: A Puerto Rican Reading of 'America,'" *Jump Cut* 39 (June 1994): 62.

"America" demonstrated Anita's advocacy for assimilation; Bernardo's death, however, causes Anita to adopt his way of thinking. Sandoval observes that "Ironically Anita, the most assimilated, ends up the most ethnic by affirming her cultural difference… From a position of pain and rage, she advises Maria to forget Tony and, 'Stick to your own kind!' In this scene, now it is Anita advocating racial and ethnic segregation."[99] Although Anita has changed her opinion, the use of lighting shows that her vision of Tony is wrong. For example, Anita sings "a boy like that wants one thing only" in the shadows (Figure 1.8c). Anita's anger towards Tony has become racially charged, and she cannot see past her newfound hate. Maria soon challenges Anita's intolerance and persuades her via "I Have a Love." Although Joseph Swain claims that "Anita's animosity is rooted in the shallowness of her own relationship with her lover Bernardo," I would argue that the ease with which Maria persuades her friend attests to the depth of feeling that Anita and Bernardo did share.[100] Maria reminds her friend of the love that she felt for Bernardo. The cut in the film actually makes this more explicit in that Anita needs less persuasion. By seeing the same depth of feeling in Maria that she has experienced, Anita can overcome the racial intolerance that her anger caused.

The film's final view of Anita is as a victim. After she has been presented as strong, sassy, and sexual, the Jet gang seemingly steals all of this away from her in the attempt to rape her. Anita enters wearing the head wrap seen previously when she enters Maria's room. The wrap provides visual proof of a newfound modesty brought about by Bernardo's death. Tellingly, the "Mambo" plays on the jukebox as Anita enters Doc's drugstore. In her book, Wells asserts that "it is not just Anita as a character, but her signature music (both Hispanic but also the moment –in 'America'- in which she showed the most impudence and spark) which is battered

[99]Ibid., 62.
[100]Swain, 4.

by the Jets."[101] Although persecuted by the Jets, Anita shows some of her strength by persevering in her attempt to reach Tony. Clearly, she is afraid but has courage. The gang begins to physically harass her, and the camera shows them pulling at her face and clothes then focuses on body and legs. Meanwhile, a distorted version of "America" music plays on the jukebox as they push her around. The camera moves around, providing flashes of the assailants and Anita. Although Doc prevents an actual rape, the audience's final image of Anita is that of a victimized woman, who, desiring revenge, brings about Tony's belief that Maria is dead.[102]

Figure 1.8. Visual Representations of Anita: *a*, "Dance at the Gym;" *b*, "America;" *c*, Anita sings "A boy like that wants one thing only." Screen Captures.

A White American Tomboy

The tomboy Anybodys attempts to challenge the male-dominated society but remains continually marginalized throughout the film. She is also one of the few characters who does not have a Shakespearean counterpart. Wells defines Anybodys as "a tomboy who is almost genderless, rejected by the Jet girls as too unfeminine and by the Jet boys as kind of a freak."[103] She sees the inclusion of Anybodys within the musical as a nod to the growing prominence of girl gangs. Wells's observations also highlight the liminal quality of this tomboy – she does not

[101]Wells, 161.

[102]The script and comments from the collaborators imply an attempted rape. However, the scene can be staged more explicitly and even suggest an actual rape. For example, the recent Broadway production makes it clear that Doc is interrupting Anita's rape rather than preventing it.

[103]Wells, 162.

truly fit into any part of this world. An alternate reading of Anybodys identifies her need to join the gang and dress as a boy as a potential outlet for lesbianism. Negrón-Muntaner points out that in this world where white women are nothing more than "accessories," Anybodys's indeterminate gender role is the subject of laughter throughout the musical.[104]

In a musical, both song and dance connote power and enhance characterization. Therefore, it is notable that the collaborators never allowed Anybodys to sing and rarely allowed her to dance. Sondheim and Bernstein originally wrote a song called "Like Everybody Else" that featured Anybodys, Baby John, and A-Rab but cut it before the opening of the Broadway production.[105] This song brings the marginalization of these three characters to the forefront as each character sings about what makes them different: being a girl, young, or small, respectively. Anybodys confronts what makes her different, singing "I swear and I smoke and I inhale. Why can't I be male/Like everybody else?"[106] This song would have given Anybodys a forum to address her liminality and an agency that she otherwise lacks. However, the filmmakers do not appear to have considered reinstating the song for the film version. Therefore, Anybodys maintains her thoroughly marginal and powerless role. In the Prologue that introduces the rivalry between the Jets and Sharks, Anybodys does not appear in the dance sequence but does slip in for the final fight. After A-Rab mocks her undesirability, Riff sends her away just before the "Jet Song." Clearly, she cannot be defined as a Jet. Similarly, she does not participate in the "Gee, Officer Krupke" or "Cool." She is either relegated to the sidelines or simply not present at all. However, she dances for a brief period during the "Dance at the Gym" sequence.

[104]Negrón-Muntaner, 99.
[105]Simeone includes a section which discusses the reasons that this song was cut, 59-60.
[106]Qtd. in Simeone, 59.

Figure 1.9. Anybodys, "Dance at the Gym." Screen Capture.

Unlike the rest of the gang, she still wears her street clothes (Figure 1.9). Not only is she not dressed like a girl but does not even "dress sharp," highlighting her outsider status. For roughly ten seconds of the "Blues" section, Anybodys dances not with but *as* one of the guys. However, A-Rab accidentally kicks her while dancing and seemingly just realizing she was there, he ejects her from the dance floor. For the rest of the dance, Anybodys takes her place on the sidelines.

After the Rumble, Anybodys appoints herself as Tony's unofficial protector. Not actually present at the Rumble, she seems to have lurking in the pipes and therefore can help rescue Tony from the police after everyone else has fled. In fact, she refuses to leave without him, repeatedly shouting "Come on, Tony!" until he escapes with her. After "Cool," the audience and Jets discover that Anybodys has been "infiltrating PR territory" and found out that Chino wants to shoot Tony. This information earns Anybodys the commendation she has been seeking from the gang's new leader, Ice. Twice more, Anybodys attempts to act as Tony's protector. She finds him and brings him to Doc's when he leaves Maria's bedroom. However, Tony ultimately rejects Anybody's help by countering her pleas with "You're a girl. Be a girl and beat it!" Thus, Anybody's triumph is short-lived as the last lines directed at her once again bring to light her outsider status.

Dumb Broads

Graziella and Velma, the girlfriends of Riff and Ice, suffer a similarly peripheral role. Wells goes so far as to say that "the Jet girls have absolutely nothing to do, no plot function."[107] The two characters are never really introduced; they first appear at the "Dance at the Gym" on the arms of their boyfriends. The dance shows a difference in treatment between the "American" and Puerto Rican girls. Before the "Promenade," Riff simply jerks head to summon Graziella. She answers by strutting over and taking his hand. In contrast, Bernardo ostentatiously but graciously holds out hand for Anita and presents her to the whole room. Once the "Mambo" begins, the Jet girls dance moves are much less sexual than the "spitfire Latinas." As the dance continues, Graziella and Riff become the center of their semi-circle. Riff quickly upstages Graziella as he performs a series of gymnastic moves. Furthermore, the camera clearly follows him, even cutting her out of the frame during closer shots. The "Dance at the Gym" shows the white "American" girls to be both less desirable and less important than their Puerto Rican counterparts.

The most extended stretch of dialogue that Graziella and Velma have occurs directly before "Officer Krupke." The film uses the dialogue originally placed before "Cool" as the two songs have been interchanged in this version. When Riff warns the girls to leave before the Sharks arrive, Graziella puts on a show of possible independence. Haughtily, she claims "we might, and then again we might not." However, this one line of defiance is never developed, and Graziella does leave when Riff shoos her away with a pat on the behind. Although Graziella argues that "I and Velma ain't dumb," their superfluous, superficial, and ungrammatical talk contradict the assertion. Giggles and vacuous nonsense words, such as "oo, ooblee-oo,"

[107]Wells, 161.

punctuate their dialogue. This scene serves to further demarcate the Jets' girlfriends as arm candy.

The girls appear once in relative prominence after the Rumble, highlighted in the film by the switching of "Krupke" and "Cool." Graziella can be seen mourning the death of Riff, succumbing to the hysteria that Ice wants to prevent. The gang and girls retire into the garage. Ice turns on a car's headlights, and Velma follows suit. She seems ready to back up her boyfriend and play it cool. The presence of the girls allows for some couples dancing. They also dance on their own for brief sections of the fugue. However, the guys remain the focus of the dance. Significantly, this is in opposition to the Puerto Rican women's role in "America." In "Cool," the girls often dance in back and sometimes even stand on the sidelines watching the male dancers. While the girls sing during the chorus, this scene does little to bring the Jet girls out of the margins. In fact, the placement of "Cool" in the film further explains why the girls need to compose themselves without attaching too much importance to their presence. They must also avoid police suspicion, not because they were involved but to protect their men.

The Mamas

The absence of adult women in *West Side Story* emphasizes the powerlessness of the adults, especially women, in regards to the lives of these youths. Notably, the lack of adult women marks a significant departure from *Romeo and Juliet*. Although Shakespeare's play also focuses on the tragedy of the youth, the adults are far more present and display an agency that *West Side Story* removes. Laurents turned Juliet's nurse into the young, sexy Anita who also loved Maria's brother, Bernardo. Thus, Maria's mentor is not an older woman but a young, albeit experienced, girl only a few years older. Laurents cut the mothers of the two protagonists completely from the cast. In *Romeo and Juliet*, both Lady Montague and Lady Capulet each

appear in the play. Lady Capulet, in particular, plays a role in the events of the tragedy. After the death of Tybalt, she pleads with Prince Escalus to put Romeo to death. After Romeo's banishment, she discusses poisoning the young man and presses Juliet to marry the eligible Paris. *West Side Story* eliminates both the influence and reactions of the young lovers' mothers, making them even more ineffectual than the adult men.

The musical contains two significant references to mothers in the mock marriage sequence preceding "One Hand, One Heart" as well as in the comic number, "Gee, Officer Krupke." Tony and Maria imagine introducing one another to their parents, focusing particularly on the "mamas" (as Maria refers to their mothers). In their playacting, Tony asks his mother for permission to marry Maria. As Dash points out, "the shop mannequins are wonderful surrogates; they can't talk – or fight."[108] In theory, Tony acknowledges the importance of parental (especially maternal) approval without actually seeking it. Tony and Maria represent their mothers as benign but insignificant in terms of their actual lives. The lyrics of "Gee, Officer Krupke" paint a different picture of the mothers' roles. While no more important than other factors, mothers share the role as a cause of juvenile delinquency. Lines such as "our mothers all are junkies" and "my mommy clobbers me" depict these mothers as abusive drug addicts. Much less benign than Tony and Maria's mothers, these women seemingly play a role in how society views their children.

The literal absence of these women may also mirror anxiety towards working women in the post-war era. On one hand, "Krupke" represents the mothers as only part of the problem, a single link in the chain. They may also, however, embody the tension between the homemaker and working woman. Jim Lovensheimer describes this tension in relation to Nellie Forbush from

[108]Dash, 107.

Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific* (1949). Drawing on Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique,* Lovensheimer notes that postwar cultural trends encouraged women to "cultivate lives as little more than appendages to their professional husbands, and that they should find satisfaction in that domestic role."[109] Furthermore, Maureen Honey asserts that "the nuclear family came to represent the values of all Americans and…also stood for the survival of decency and humanity in a world rent by suffering."[110] Without this stability, the teenagers in *West Side Story* turn to delinquency. The film gives precious little information on any of the mothers' careers, legitimate or otherwise. Lieutenant Schrank does reveal that one gang member's mother is actually a prostitute with the taunt, "How's the action on your mother's side of the street, Action?" During the mock-marriage scene in the bridal shop, Tony implies that his mother stays home when he claims, "she lives in the kitchen." This possibility opens up the opportunity for Tony to escape the clutches of gang life because he has a more stable home life. Although he was once leader of the Jets, Tony, more than any other member, shows the potential for another life. The expected return of "Rosie the Riveter" to the home leads to another level of commentary concerning juvenile delinquency in the 1950s.

All of the female characters occupy a marginal space both within the world of the narrative and from the perspective of the audience. The male characters manage to push aside even the two women who most challenge stereotypes. The Jets victimize Anita and Tony rejects Anybodys. In the film, cinematic techniques accentuate women's marginalization in a number of ways. The camera encourages the audience to view these women as largely unimportant or objects of beauty. The secondary status of females may indicate a homosexual male spectator. However, the look of the camera assumes a heterosexual male, particularly in the case of Maria

[109]Jim Lovensheimer, *South Pacific: Paradise Revised* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 115.
[110]Qtd. in Lovensheimer, 122.

and Anita. Gendered ethnic stereotypes abound in the representation of women. The film challenges these stereotypes in important ways yet seems to ultimately succumb to the marginalization of women.

Conclusion

The 1961 film *West Side Story* remains popular in the realm of movie musicals. It still holds a place in the American consciousness, in part due to the sheer number of Oscars the film received in 1962. It made a prominent showing on the American Film Institute's series of 100 greatest lists, appearing six times on three lists.[111] For the fortieth anniversary of the film in 2001, Turner Classic Movies sponsored a celebration with a special screening at Radio City Music Hall at which several cast and crew members were present. In the wake of the fiftieth anniversary, several books were released, including Barry Monush's book for the *Music on Film Series*. In my own experience, many people without much musical training or knowledge feel that they can connect with my research because at one time or another they have seen the movie *West Side Story*. The ongoing awareness of the film has bearing on stage productions of the musical throughout the United States.

As Linda Hutcheon mentions, a change in medium usually evokes a sense of hierarchy in the arts.[112] Shakespeare's play continues to merit study by theatre scholars, while a live performance may be only as good as the people involved in the production. The script for *West Side Story* adapts the Shakespeare and becomes a Broadway musical with all of its own conventions and expectations. Scholars hail the Broadway adaptation as a pioneering and well-executed piece of *musical* theatre, making it a legitimate source of study though perhaps less

[111] *West Side Story* appeared as #51 on "100 years, 100 films," #59 on 100 Songs" for "Tonight," #35 on "100 Songs" for "America," #20 on "100 Songs" for "Somewhere", #3 on "100 Passions," and #2 on "25 Greatest Movie Musicals."

[112]Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 34.

serious than its Shakespearean counterpart. Finally, the stage musical is adapted into a Hollywood movie musical. The film version holds less weight; it is either lumped together with the stage version, dismissed as simply a popular success, degenerated as racist and/or badly acted, or ignored altogether. Therefore, the film version of *West Side Story* might be viewed as representing the lowest rung in a hierarchy with *Romeo and Juliet* at its peak based on the change of medium from stage to film. I have focused on the transition from one medium to another and the changes incurred along the way without placing the different versions in some sort of artistic hierarchy.

The story and issues in *West Side Story* continue to resonate today. Intolerance and gang warfare still exist in contemporary America, and racial and gender stereotyping still permeates the entertainment industry. The representations of gender and race in the musical follow from precedents but also allow for updated ways to challenge the stereotypes. Although based in 1950s New York and addressing contemporary issues, the connection with Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* promotes a timeless quality in the adaptation. The notion of the star-crossed lovers has spoken to a number of generations and continues to do so. Four great talents of musical theater came together to create a well-crafted timely and yet timeless musical. Despite the problems and static quality of the 1961 film, it remains a creative adaptation that in many ways remains relevant.

My focus in this chapter on fidelity and the representation of women illustrates the filmmakers' approach to adapting the stage version. Premiering at the beginning of a new decade, *West Side Story* resonates with the previous decade and looks forward to things to come. It divides along both ethnic and gender lines to depict a specific urban teenage experience – one that struggles with absent adult role models, diversity, poverty, and traditional gender roles. My

analysis of the female characters in this film aims to illustrate the ambivalence towards strong women and the nature of relationships between the genders more generally. In many ways, the film takes its cue from the original Broadway production, keeping the female characters in a marginal role. Yet the mere presence of a star such as Natalie Wood coupled with the power of Rita Moreno's performance complicates the issue. With the burgeoning women's rights movement, the ambiguities and contradictions within the film *West Side Story* intersect with its historical moment in significant and telling ways. Moreover, this film can be seen as working in counterpoint with the case studies from the next chapter, presenting a different viewpoint of teenage life and America than the Midwestern *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie*.

CHAPTER 2 – A Family Affair: *The Music Man* (1962) and *Bye Bye Birdie* (1963)

Introduction

This chapter complements the previous one as two sides of the same American coin – one urban, one small-town. At the same time, the two case studies discussed here reveal their own complex and interesting accounts of the American Midwest. Like *West Side Story*, *The Music Man* (1962) and *Bye Bye Birdie* (1963) are resoundingly American in terms of setting, content, and message. All of these musicals also explore various aspects of youth and youth culture. *Bye Bye Birdie* further shares with *West Side Story* a contemporary setting, though as a parody of Elvis and teen culture. The two case studies from this chapter, however, differ from the last in that they are located small-town Middle America rather than the urban center of New York City. These films thus tap into the hopes and concerns of a large potential audience for Hollywood film musicals.[1] While the adults in *West Side Story* prove to be absent or ineffectual, those in *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* are an integral part of their children's lives. Indeed, families come to the forefront in these two films and family values are the order of the day. In her article "*West Side Story* and *The Music Man*: Whiteness, Immigration, and Race in the US during the Late 1950s," Carol J. Oja asserts that together these musicals from 1957 "symbolized the whole of a complex and contradictory nation."[2] In my first two chapters, I contextualize the cinematic

[1]According to the 1960 census, the United States population was 179,323,175. Nearly one third of this number (51,619,139) resided in the North Central part of the country, which includes states generally considered as part of the Midwest. On the one hand, the states depicted in *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* represent a small portion of the population (only 2,665,260 in Ohio and 1,194,020 in Iowa). Yet the concerns and values in the film resonate not only with people living in the same region but those in small towns across the rest of the country. Information from U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1960*, Vol. 1 *Characteristics of the Population*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1964.

[2]Carol J. Oja, "*West Side Story* and *The Music Man*: Whiteness, Immigration, and Race in the US during the Late 1950s," *Studies in Musical Theatre* 3: 1 (2009), 14.

versions of the musicals that Oja discusses, which become slightly removed in time and add *Bye Bye Birdie* as presenting yet another view of small-town America.

In the years following *West Side Story* a number of socio-cultural and political events occurred. The Cold War remained a significant source of concern, and in fact even began to heat up to frightening levels. Both the Soviet Union and the United States engaged in nuclear testing, and the strain between the two powers came to a head during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. Once the U.S. discovered that the Soviets were installing nuclear missiles so close to home, President Kennedy faced an emergency situation. Barry Keith Grant notes that "the world waited for almost a week at the brink of nuclear war until Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev offered to remove Soviet missiles from Cuba if the United States did the same in Turkey."[3] At the same time, the Civil Rights Movement was making headway. In 1963, Kennedy proposed a civil rights bill to Congress. And in August of that same year, Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his now legendary inspirational "I Have a Dream" speech in Washington, D.C. Just a few months later, John. F. Kennedy was assassinated, affecting the entire country. With these events, among many others, 1962 and '63 were years filled with hope and anxiety, joy and despair – oppositions that would become sharper and be used to describe much of the decade.

The release of the film version of *The Music Man* occurred right on the cusp of second-wave feminism. Simone de Beauvoir's influential text *The Second Sex* had been available for nearly ten years, and the birth control pill became widely available in 1961. Also in 1961, President Kennedy established the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women. However, Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, generally considered to be a major catalyst in the feminist movement, had yet to be published. And many of the legal strides in women's rights

[3]Barry Keith Grant, "Introduction: Movies and the 1960s," in *American Cinema of the 1960s: Themes and Variations*, ed. Barry Keith Grant (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 3.

were also yet to come. Both *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie*, particularly in their film incarnations, interact with burgeoning feminist viewpoints in specific and highly ambiguous ways.

During this time, cultural phenomena that were on the rise in the 1950s proved to be here to stay. In the realm of popular music, rock 'n' roll and related genres were certainly a mainstay in the music industry. Upon returning from his tour of military duty, Elvis continued to dominate charts with hit singles. Teen idols such as Bobby Darin and Frankie Avalon offered a wholesome, less overtly sexualized pop alternative to the more "dangerous" rock sound of the likes of Elvis. Yet the popular music scene was also changing. Bob Dylan released his first album in 1962. The Beatles were gaining an enormous following in the U.K., though they had yet to make an impact in the States.

As the popular music scene indicates, youth culture predominated and music was at its center. Fad dancing, as evidenced by the Twist and the Mashed Potato, drew on older popular dance styles while infusing them with trendy status and current popular music. These dance crazes made appearances in a number of films over the years. Most significantly for the purposes of this dissertation is the proliferation of teen films and even more specifically teen musicals. The plight of the young has long been subject matter for entertainment and of course film. While some films, including *West Side Story* and *Blackboard Jungle* (1955), dealt with youth culture in a multiracial or multiethnic urban setting, others depicted the troubles of rural, Middle American teens in a more homogenous white setting. In the 1950s, films such as *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), starring James Dean, explored the feelings of misunderstanding and anguish among youths. In 1961, *Splendor in the Grass*, starring Warren Beatty and Natalie Wood, centered its

angst-ridden narrative around sexual repression and misplaced conservatism in a teenaged context.

More lighthearted fare such as the *Beach Party* series depicted teen culture (specifically surfer culture) in romantic comedy with wholesome stars such as Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello. These films eschew examination of the darker or seamier sides of teenage angst for more virtuous and conservative outcomes. For example, in the 1963 film *Beach Party*, Frankie hopes to spend a romantic weekend alone with girlfriend Dolores (Annette Funicello). Dolores, however, does not trust herself alone with dreamy Frankie and invites all of their friends. This sparks a fight in which both parties use other people to make each other jealous. Dolores makes it quite clear throughout the film that she wants Frankie to think of her as a wife rather than simply a sexual plaything. And in fact, the happy conclusion finds the couple back together and affirming their love – presented as more fulfilling than simply sex. Significantly, this film and the series that follows are musicals. As both Avalon and Funicello are singers, the films become vehicles for their talent with catchy pop tunes and wistful ballads. *Beach Party* contains a ubiquitous bongo player and features the surf music pioneers Dick Dale and the Del Tones. The musical numbers also incorporate dancing, including dance featuring a girl referred to as the "perpetual motion dancer" in the credits.

The proliferation of teen films, whether dramatic or lighthearted, urban or rural, exposes the generational gap. These films dramatize the difference between the lives of teenagers and their parents. In *Splendor in the Grass*, for example, the parental figures cannot relate to their children to such an extent that they actually act as a catalyst for the ultimate pain and ruin that the main characters experience. In *Beach Party*, the teens' parents are absent. Yet the presence of the older anthropologist, Professor Sutwell, provides a focal point for the disconnection between

the younger and older generation. Sutwell hopes to study the odd mating behavior of the teens at the beach and is the constant butt of jokes to the group. The teenagers view him as unhip, and the constant misunderstandings between Sutwell and the younger characters is a source of humor. These examples are indicative of the trend to narrativize the generation gap.

Furthermore, rock 'n' roll superstar Elvis Presley starred in a number of increasingly formulaic musicals. Elvis appeared in his first film in 1956 with *Love Me Tender*. In the sixties, he made twenty-seven low-budget, formulaic films, including *Blue Hawaii* (1961). The films were wholesome and youth-oriented without engaging in the counterculture that would characterize an important facet of the decade. Mark Feeney asserts that the "great paradox of Elvis's career is that the man who did so much to trigger 'the sixties' spent that decade on the sidelines in Hollywood…standing in flaccid contradiction to everything the sixties represented."[4] Feeney draws on both the notion that the rebellion represented by Elvis in the fifties would influence similar modes of behavior in the sixties and a rather cut-and-dried idea of the sixties as a decade. As the popularity of Elvis's films attests, the decade was more complex than Feeney suggests. Of course, Elvis's films partly made money simply because he was in them. As Feeney observes, "his movie career, while certainly a part of his fame, was more a tribute to his popularity than a major contributor to it."[5] Yet they also represent a different perspective on popular culture than the countercultural rebellion that would become so influential in the later sixties. By the time that *Bye Bye Birdie* was released in 1963, Elvis had made enough films for the parody to be considered in dialogue with Elvis's actual films.

[4]Mark Feeney, "Elvis Movies" in *American Scholar* 70: 1 (Winter 2001), 53-4.
[5]Ibid., 55.

Television had become more widespread throughout the 1950s, and Grant notes that nearly "90 percent of American households had a TV set" by 1960.[6] Therefore, studios looked for ways to both use television to its advantage and "lure viewers off their sofas and into movie theaters."[7] Televised films developed as one way for studios to capitalize on the new medium. Major studios could re-release films for home viewing and even produce made-for-television movies. Furthermore, studios could use programs such as *The Ed Sullivan Show* to promote films being released in theaters. At the same time, several strategies emerged as a means of bringing people into theaters. The low-budget teen oriented musicals sought the youth audience through trendy music, dancing, and stars. They offered a way for studios to make a profit without spending too much. On the other hand, the continuation of large-scale, big-budget genre films were produced in order to offer a special entertainment that constituted a night out. By the early 1960s, television was a major force with which the film industry would have to reckon.

The state of the film industry in the early sixties was in flux. As the success of *West Side Story* shows, musicals still had strong box office appeal. Yet as the "Beach Party" series indicates, studios could also produce formulaic, low-budget musical films oriented towards teenagers to make a profit without expending the resources necessary for a glossy Broadway adaptation. The 1950s had already seen a drop in the number of musicals produced from previous decades, and the number would continue to decline as the sixties wore on. In fact, high-budget genre films in general suffered a hit in the early part of the decade. The disappointment caused by the epic *Cleopatra* (1963) epitomizes the time. Starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, Twentieth Century Fox expected the historical epic to do well. However, the studio did not recoup its incredibly high budget of roughly forty-four million dollars, making only twenty-

[6]Barry Keith Grant, 12.
[7]Ibid., 12.

six million in the first year. Therefore, the film – despite being the highest grossing film of the year – was initially a box-office disappointment that almost bankrupted Fox. Symbolically, the beginning of the decade seemed to signal the end of an era. Classical Hollywood figures began to pass away, including Clark Gable and Gary Cooper in 1961, Marilyn Monroe and Charles Laughton in 1962, and Dick Powell in 1963.

Thus, the industrial turmoil that characterized the entire decade was already becoming apparent. In this light, the nostalgia for an ideal of domesticity associated with earlier eras found in *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* may not be unexpected. Domestic values are specifically linked with the Midwest in these films. Unlike *West Side Story*, which presents an urban landscape and the social ills that accompany urban living, *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* overcome much less serious hurdles in comparison to the ethnic strife and tragedy that befalls the youths in the earlier film. The problems that the latter two films must encounter are meant to represent more commonplace, domestic-oriented issues that the wider American population might experience. Although all three films originated as Broadway productions, *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* seem uniquely placed to have made the move to Hollywood and therefore to the wider audience base of film. While Broadway audiences are based in New York or are tourists, Hollywood films have the ability to reach audiences across the country and beyond. Therefore, the glorification of the Midwest that occurs in both films aims to connect with a large portion of the film-going population. Connecting an aura of innocence and wholesome values with the Midwest implies that this area of America embraces the traditional gender roles and family values associated with the 1950s.[8] Consequently, the Midwestern region emerges as a socially conservative yet idyllic locale.

[8]A number of scholars discuss how this impression of the 1950s became prevalent in the 1960s and beyond as well as the ways in which reality and the ideal diverged significantly. See Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never*

The Shows

The Broadway production of *The Music Man* opened on December 19, 1957, in the Majestic Theatre. Broadway rookie Meredith Willson wrote the book, music, and lyrics for the show based on his childhood experiences in Mason City, Iowa. The show, about a fast-talking traveling salesman who comes to the stubborn small-town of River City, starred Robert Preston as the charismatic Harold Hill and Barbara Cook as the town librarian who falls in love with him. Morton Da Costa, veteran stage director, helmed the Broadway production. Critics enjoyed the wholesome American comedy. As Brooks Atkinson put it,

> Every Broadway hack longs to write an old-fashioned, uncomplicated musical comedy that will delight all theatregoers – the Philistines who are screaming that "West Side Story' has swindled them out of an evening's pleasure, as well as the intelligentsia. "The Music Man" has the common touch; it provides a rousing holiday for everyone.[9]

Due to the proximity of their opening dates, *The Music Man* invited comparison with the more "serious" *West Side Story*. And Willson's light-hearted musical invariably won out. Critics especially praised the dynamic performance of Robert Preston – typically a dramatic actor – as the eponymous music man. The show beat out *West Side Story* at the Tony Awards, winning Best Musical. Not surprisingly, Preston also took home the Tony for Best Actor in a Musical, along with Barbara Cook winning for Best Actress in a Musical and David Burns for Best Featured Actor in a Musical for his performance as Mayor Shinn. The show was also popular with audiences, running for 1,375 performances. Furthermore, the soundtrack did exceptionally

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Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap (New York: Basic Books, 1992). And for how a similar type of nostalgia for an ideal of 1950s domestic containment plays out in other films, see Ann McLeer, "Practical Perfection? The Nanny Negotiates Gender, Class, and Family Contradictions in 1960s Popular Culture," *NWSA Journal* 14: 2 (Summer 2002).

[9]Brooks Atkinson, "*The Music Man*: Robert Preston Becomes Lyric Stage Star in Meredith Willson's Revel Americana," *New York Times*, Dec 29, 1957, 53.

well. It was not only ranked number one on the Billboard 200 for some weeks, it won the Grammy Award for Best Original Cast Album in 1958.

Scholars often discuss the fact that *The Music Man* is an American musical *about* America and music. Knapp asserts that this show "seemed to many the most perfect of American musicals – and why not, when every problem it presents is solved specifically *through* music."[10] Scott Miller concurs, noting that music is used in this show "not just as a dramatic language (as in most musicals) but also conscious plot devices."[11] As Mark Grant points out, Willson was a prolific composer in multiple arenas, including film, radio, and symphonic work. Therefore, music emerges as a central force in his first musical. Larry Stempel discusses the multiple purposes of music in the show, which include a means for Hill to "mask his deceptions."[12] Similarly, scholars often discuss Willson's use of music to represent the River City community and the romance between Harold Hill and Marian Paroo. Multiple scholars, including Knapp and Stempel, discuss the melodic and harmonic connection between Marian's "Goodnight, My Someone" and Hill's "Seventy-six Trombones." Furthermore, scholars, such as Roberta Freund Schwartz, explore Willson's use of "speak-song" and its meaning.[13] This type of close relationship between character, narrative, and music leads Mark Grant to assert that *The Music*

[10]Raymond Knapp, *The American Musical and the Formation of National Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 144.

[11]Scott Miller, *Deconstructing Harold Hill: An Insider's Guide to Musical Theatre* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000), 74. See Miller, 81-91 for a discussion of Willson's score.

[12]Larry Stempel, *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 443.

[13]Schwartz connects the "speak-song" and fluid movement from dialogue to song and back with Willson's preoccupation with language and ability to successfully depict Iowans onstage. See Roberta Freund Schwartz, "Iowa Stubborn: Meredith Willson's Musical Characterization of his Fellow Iowans," *Studies in Musical Theatre* 3: 1 (2009), 31–41.

Man, "despite its cornpone setting, is, in its construction, one of Broadway's most sophisticated scores."[14]

Furthermore, *The Music Man* depicts an American setting with small-town American characters and references distinctively American music. Willson himself played flute in John Philip Sousa's band, and band music is both aurally and narratively important to the musical. He also uses a barbershop quartet, which can be seen as "symboliz[ing] American male fellowship or camraderies, set in a utopian Main Street, U.S.A. of long ago."[15] Since its premiere, critics and scholars have commented on the very Americanness of the musical. Set in 1912, the musical further points towards a nostalgic, pure America through what Carol J. Oja calls "rhapsodic constructions of a simpler America."[16] Kimberly Canton discusses the show in relation to a middlebrow culture in a debate that she contends remained rampant during Willson's own time and is particularly American. Canton asserts that *The Music Man* argues for the "superiority of both the middlebrow aesthetic and the fundamentally American values it supposedly generates."[17] Set in Iowa, the musical's regionalism also draws the attention of scholars.

For a description of influences and the genesis of the musical, Meredith Willson's writings still provide the best source of information. Willson wrote a trio of autobiographical books that discuss various aspects of his life and varied career. In particular, see *But He Doesn't Know the Territory* for Willson's recollections, conception, and making of the stage production.[18] This autobiographical work on *The Music Man* touches on many themes and details

[14]Mark Grant, *The Rise and Fall of the Broadway Musical* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004), 112.

[15]Oja, 19.

[16]Ibid., 17.

[17]Kimberly Fairbrother Canton, '''Who's Selling Here?' Sounds Like The Music Man Is Selling and We're Buying," *Modern Drama* 51:1 (Spring 2008), 42.

[18]Meredith Willson, *And There I Stood with My Piccolo* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948); Meredith Willson, *Eggs I Have Laid* (New York: Holt, 1955); and Meredith Willson, *But He Doesn't Know the Territory* (New York: Putnam, 1959).

that scholars also pick up on, including Willson's self-acknowledged "Iowa style," his "speak-songs," and counterpoint melodies.[19] Furthermore, biographies of the composer place his most popular work into the larger context of his career. For example, Bill Oates discusses the conception, casting, rehearsal process, alterations before opening, reception, and the film negotiations of *The Music Man* as well as Willson's diverse work in radio, film, and other areas.[20]

Bye Bye Birdie opened on April 14, 1960, in the Martin Beck Theatre. The creative team consisted of book writer Michael Stewart, composer Charles Strouse, and lyricist Lee Adams – all of whom were unknowns working on their first musical. The show was an endearing parody of contemporary culture, involving an Elvis figure and his adoring teen fans. The production featured Chita Rivera as Rose Alvarez, Dick Van Dyke as Albert Peterson, and comedian Paul Lynde as Mr. McAfee. Gower Champion directed and choreographed the stage production. Critics for the most part enjoyed the good-natured and silly satire. While *New York Times* critic Brooks Atkinson called the show "uneven," John Chapman of the *New York Daily Post* found *Bye Bye Birdie* "the funniest, most captivating and most expert musical comedy one could hope to see in several seasons."[21] The show did well at the Tony Awards, winning Best Musical, Best Director and Best Choreographer for Gower Champion, and Best Featured Actor in a Musical for Dick Van Dyke. It was only a mild popular success, closing after 607 performances.

Two threads weave through the musical theater literature that considers *Bye Bye Birdie*: its confrontation with rock 'n' roll and its status as a Gower Champion musical. As scholars

[19]Willson, *Territory*, 23 and 48.

[20]Bill Oates, *Meredith Willson – America's Music Man: The Whole Broadway--Symphonic-Radio-Motion Picture Story* (Bloomington, Indiana: Author House, 2010), 131-42.

[21]Brooks Atkinson, "*Bye Bye Birdie*: Michael Stewart Play at Martin Beck," *New York Times*, April 15, 1960, 13 and John Chapman "*Bye Bye Birdie* a Funny, Fresh and Captivating Musical Show," *New York Daily News*, April 15, 1960.

consistently note, *Bye Bye Birdie* is a product of its time, dealing explicitly with the effect of the generation gap and rock 'n' roll stars like Elvis Presley. Thomas L. Riis and Ann Sears state that "because of its subject matter… *Birdie* was widely sold as a rock 'n' roll musical. In fact, the musical idiom is traditional Broadway through and through."[22] In her book on rock musicals, Elizabeth Wollman complicates this idea slightly, asserting that the musical "resorted to particularly exaggerated parodies of rock 'n' roll when it borrowed from the style at all."[23] She discusses the elements that the songs "Honestly Sincere," "One Last Kiss," and "The Telephone Hour" draw from rock, including instrumentation, melodic outline, and rhythm.[24] Furthermore, the renowned director-choreographer Gower Champion directed the stage production of *Bye Bye Birdie*. Larry Stempel contends that Champion, along with Bob Fosse, were among the choreographers to "make the biggest impact on the Broadway scene."[25] Known for emphasizing staging and spectacle, Champion shaped the stage production. Prolific musical theater author Ethan Mordden states that "*Bye Bye Birdie* is without question a fine composition. But it was Champion who assured the piece its first success."[26] In an extended discussion of the development of *Bye Bye Birdie* and Champion's role, John Gilvey claims that Champion approached the musical like a revue, going so far as to call it a "revusical," and focuses on Champion's staging and choreography.[27]

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[22]Thomas L. Riis and Ann Sears, "The Successors of Rodgers and Hammerstein from the 1940s to the 1960s," *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, ed. William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 181.

[23]Elizabeth Wollman, *The Theater Will Rock: A History of the Rock Musical* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 17.

[24]See Wollman, 16-21 for full discussion of the show and its relationship with rock 'n' roll.

[25]Stempel, *Showtime*, 573.

[26]Ethan Mordden, *Open a New Window: The Broadway Musical in the 1960s* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 8.

[27]John Gilvey, *Before the Parade Passes By: Gower Champion and the Glorious American Musical* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005), 83.

The Films

While neither *The Music Man* nor *Bye Bye Birdie* constituted a smash hit on the level of *West Side Story*, both films were fairly successful. *The Music Man* opened in June of 1962 to great pomp and circumstance in Willson's own Mason City, Iowa. The town held a weekend event that featured marching bands in celebration of the film's release. Country-wide, *The Music Man* grossed $14,953,846 and was the 5th highest grossing film of the year. *Bye Bye Birdie* did not do quite as well, grossing $13,129,412 but ranking at only thirteen for the top grossing films of the year. Still, both films had the most popular success of any other musical released in their respective years. *The Music Man* beat out fellow Broadway travelers *Gypsy* and *Billy Rose's Jumbo* while *Birdie* was the only Broadway adaptation to be released in 1963. Of course, both films also produced an accompanying soundtrack, which did moderately well. In both 1962 and 1963, *West Side Story* maintained status as the highest selling soundtrack album of the year. *The Music Man* soundtrack did well in the wake of the film's box-office success, peaking at #2 on the Billboard 200. The song "Till There Was You" also enjoyed great success and even spawned a cover version by The Beatles on their second U.S. release *Meet the Beatles!* in 1964. The soundtrack for *Birdie* also peaked at #2 on the Billboard 200 for a time.

The critical reception of the films mirrors their respective popular receptions. *The Music Man* received glowing reviews from the major film critics. Bosley Crowther opens his *New York Times* review by stating "let all who were sadly disappointed that they never got to see *The Music Man* with Robert Preston in the top role during its lengthy role on Broadway be assured that they are going to miss nothing of its quality and character in the film."[28] Throughout his review, Crowther praises the fidelity to the original show. He considers the staginess of the film

[28]Bosley Crowther, "Screen: Preston Stars in *Music Man*: Film Version of Stage Comedy Opens Here," *New York Times,* August 24, 1962.

as both appropriate to the material and maintaining the spirit of the original. In a later article, Crowther expounds upon the use of studio sets, claiming that director Morton da Costa "rightly recognized the essential artificiality of the story and the treatment of it he had to do."[29] In this follow-up, Crowther reinforces his original opinion that the very theatricality of the film is what makes it so delightful. Similarly, *LA Times* critic Philip Scheuer enthusiastically immerses himself in the musical's theatricality. In colorful language, he states that "Willson's corny, crazy musical, as nostalgic as a circus calliope and as noisy as 76 trombones, bursts on the screen in gorgeously gaudy color with all the stops out and seldom lets up for 150 more minutes. Whew! And no less gaudy, grand, and wonderful is Robert Preston."[30] Interestingly, as Crowther and Scheuer's reviews reveal, the over-the-top, theatrical nature of the film proved to be part of the appeal in the case of this film. It seems to hearken back to the golden age of musicals where bold theatricality and lush studio sets reigned supreme.

The reviews for *Bye Bye Birdie* were not quite as glowing as *The Music Man*'s. Bosley Crowther claims that the film reaches its high point with the song "Honestly Sincere" – a number that appears fairly early on. He laments that the film does not have "the essential idea of satire and the pace and sparkle of the show."[31] Remarkably, he complains that the romance between Albert and Rosie takes up too much time despite the fact several scenes and songs that chronicle this relationship have been cut for the film. In a short but sweet review, Scheuer of the *LA Times* has more positive remarks concerning the film. He asserts that *Bye Bye Birdie* "should repeat the success it scored on the stage and is in the smash class with *West Side Story* and *The Music*

[29]Bosley Crowther, "A Fanciful *Music Man*': Broadway Show Translated in Terms Of Unreality on the Screen," *New York Times*, September 2, 1962.

[30]Philip K. Scheuer, "*Music Man* Hits Key of G --- Grand, Gaudy, Gorgeous," *Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 1962.

[31]Bosley Crowther, "The Screen: *Bye Bye Birdie* Arrives at Radio City Music Hall: George Sidney Directs Version of Comedy," *New York Times*, April 5, 1963.

Man."[32] Unfortunately, audiences and fellow critics did not fully agree with Scheuer. Mae Tinee of the *Chicago Tribune* states that "the music is pleasant, the dances are spritely, and it's all amiable, light entertainment."[33] All in all, the critical reception and popular reception of *Bye Bye Birdie* seemed to agree that the film was fun and entertaining without being in the same class as its predecessors.

The Players

Both *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* contain a cast and crew that were a mix of new people and those involved in the original Broadway productions. Furthermore, members of both casts had careers in not only film but television – an important connection and shift in prominence from radio. Stage director Morton DaCosta took the helm of the film version of *The Music Man* after directing the show on Broadway. DaCosta was relatively untested in cinema as he had previously only directed *Auntie Mame* (1958) starring Rosalind Russell. Columbia, on the other hand, brought in film musical veteran director George Sidney to direct *Bye Bye Birdie*. Sidney had been directing musicals for years, including *Anchors Aweigh* (1944), *The Harvey Girls* (1946), *Annie Get Your Gun* (1960), *Show Boat* (1951), *Kiss Me Kate* (1953), and *Pal Joey* (1957).

Both *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* use Broadway choreographer Onna White to stage the musical numbers. White was a veteran stage choreographer, having worked on shows such as *Finian's Rainbow* (1947) and *Guys and Dolls* (1950). She was the choreographer for the stage version *The Music Man*, and DaCosta brought her on board for the film adaptation. *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* were her first two films. As such, her dances often tend to be

[32]Philip K. Scheuer, "*Ugly American*, *Birdie* Reviewed: Brando Drama Provocative; Musical Fast, Furious Fun," *Los Angeles Times*, April 5, 1963.

[33]Mae Tinee, "Stage Play is Bubbly in Film, Too," *Chicago Tribune*, June 24, 1963.

rather stagey. In the short documentary accompanying the DVD of *The Music Man*, White herself expressed her initial surprise and unfamiliarity with the practice of taking several takes – often at different angles – of a single dance.[34]

The Music Man, of course, stars the magnetic Robert Preston as Professor Harold Hill, reprising the role that he created on Broadway. Prior to being cast in the Broadway production of *The Music Man*, Preston primarily had been a Hollywood actor known for serious, dramatic roles. During the fifties, Preston starred in a number of plays on Broadway. But it was his starring role in his first musical that would define his career. He won the 1958 Tony Award for Best Actor in a Musical. Despite the resounding success of Preston in the stage version, Warner studios courted proven film musical star Frank Sinatra. In his biography of Willson, Bill Oates comments that "casting the film version of *The Music Man* did not run as smoothly as Willson had hoped."[35] In fact, Willson had to fight to retain Preston as Hill. Although *The Music Man* was Preston's first film musical, it would not be his last. He would go on to appear in *Mame* (1974) with Lucille Ball and *Victor Victoria* (1982) with Julie Andrews.

For their leading lady, the filmmakers cast Shirley Jones. No stranger to film musicals, Jones starred in two Hollywood adaptations of Rodgers and Hammerstein shows. She played headstrong Laurie in *Oklahoma!* (1955) and tragic heroine Julie Jordan in *Carousel* (1956). After establishing a persona of a wholesome woman with a beautiful singing voice, Jones took on a dramatic role that explored the seamier side of life. She played jilted lover turned prostitute Lulu Bains in 1960's *Elmer Gantry* and won the Academy Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role in 1961. Thus, Marian the Librarian represented a return to Jones's wholesome image in

[34]Shirley Jones, et al., "Right Here in River City: The Making of Meredith Willson's *The Music Man*," special features. *The Music Man*. Directed by Morton DaCosta. (Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 1962).

[35]Oates, 134.

many ways. Yet her powerhouse performance as a vengeful prostitute allowed for a more complex star text that enhances elements of her character in *The Music Man.*

The supporting cast similarly features a mix of familiar and new actors. Pert Kelton reprised her role as Marion Paroo's brash Irish mother. Before being cast as Mrs. Paroo on Broadway, Kelton had a lengthy film and television career as a comedienne. In the early fifties, she created the role of Alice Kramden in "The Honeymooners" sketches opposite Jackie Gleason on *Cavalcade of Stars*. Also carried over from Broadway were "The Buffalo Bills" (Vern Reed, Al Shea, Wayne Ward, and Bill Spangenberg), the barbershop quartet who played the bickering school board members. The Buffalo Bills were a well-known barbershop quartet with an album from Decca Records. The filmmakers chose comedian Buddy Hackett to play con man gone straight Marcellus Washburn. Prior to *The Music Man*, Hackett was primarily a nightclub and television comic with a handful of movies. His trademark voice and broad delivery style brought a certain charm to Harold Hill's partner in crime. British actress Hermione Gingold plays the hilariously outspoken and often absurd Eulalie MacKechnie Shinn. Gingold had a lengthy career as a stage and film actress. She played Madame Alvarez in Lerner and Lowe's 1958 film musical *Gigi*. Rounding out the well-known members of the supporting cast is Ron Howard. Child actor Ronnie Howard had already been in several films and television role before playing Winthrop Paroo. In 1960, he was cast as Opie in *The Andy Griffith Show*. Young Howard would go on to star in the hit tv show *Happy Days* among numerous other roles as well as become a successful film director and producer.

Columbia also drew from both Broadway and Hollywood for *Bye Bye Birdie*. Dick Van Dyke played struggling songwriter and Mama's boy Albert Peterson on Broadway and in Hollywood. Prior to being cast as Albert Peterson in the stage production of *Bye Bye Birdie*, Van

Dyke was a comedian who had worked primarily in radio and the nightclub circuit with a few television appearances. He made his Broadway debut in 1959 in the musical revue *The Girls Against the Boys*. After his success in *Bye Bye Birdie*, Van Dyke began *The Dick Van Dyke Show* – a popular sitcom that ran from 1961-66, which made him a household name. Paul Lynde also reprised his role from stage version as Harry McAfee. Lynde had been in a number of sitcoms and variety shows in the 1950s, and like Van Dyke, had been in a revue on Broadway. After the film version of *Bye Bye Birdie*, Lynde would continue to work in film and especially television – including a popular recurring role in the sitcom *Bewitched*.

The two female leads, Rose DeLeon and Kim McAfee, were played by Hollywood veteran Janet Leigh and newcomer Ann-Margret respectively. Janet Leigh came to the film a highly successful actress, known for films such as *Touch of Evil* (1958) and *Psycho* (1960). Throughout the forties and fifties, Leigh played a beautiful ingénue opposite a number of Hollywood's leading men including James Stewart, Kirk Douglas, and husband Tony Curtis. Her long career and recent notable roles – such as Marion in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960) – create a star text for her portrayal of Rose in *Bye Bye Birdie*. Unlike Leigh, Ann-Margret was relatively untested. While Janet Leigh entered into *Bye Bye Birdie* as a star, the film would catapult younger Ann-Margret into stardom. Ann-Margret was a Swedish singer and actress. George Sidney took advantage of the young actress's sexiness that had already been revealed in the 1962 remake of *State Fair* in songs such as "Willing and Eager." In *Bye Bye Birdie*, Ann-Margret develops the breathy voice (singing and spoken) and sex-kitten persona that would become her trademark. Other cast members, especially those carried over from the Broadway production, disliked Sidney's decision to focus on the younger actress. In his autobiography,

Dick Van Dyke claims that Leigh "had no idea that Ann-Margret's part would be so all-consuming and hers would be so minor.[36]

One interesting addition to the cast was teen idol Bobby Rydell as Hugo Peabody. Rydell's pop style has a similar sound as contemporary teen idols Bobby Darin, Frankie Avalon, James Darren, and Fabian in that it combines the sounds of rock 'n' roll with the nightclub style of Frank Sinatra or Dean Martin to create a brand of pop aimed at teenagers. As Simon Frith asserts, "teen pop idols were manufactured (Pat Boone, Fabian) or evolved from rock'n'rollers to all-around entertainers… Adult pop conventions were adapted for the teenage market."[37] For instance, Rydell not only recorded original tunes such as "Wild One" and "Wildwood Days" but standards made famous by Dean Martin such as "Volare" and "Sway." His songs were incredibly popular – in 1960, "Wild One" charted at #2 while "Volare" topped at #4. Rydell also followed in his fellow idols', such as Frankie Avalon, footsteps by acting in a film. And as I will explore further in the section on *Bye Bye Birdie* and contemporary teen life, the use of pop star Rydell adds a significant dimension to his character and role in the narrative.

Fidelity and Translation to Film

Throughout the history of the Hollywood movie musical adaptation, fidelity to the original show has been handled in various ways. Geoffrey Block observes that before the Rodgers and Hammerstein era Hollywood musical adaptations were often "footloose and fancy free and at times unrecognizable vis-à-vis their stage counterparts" while film adaptations since the famed duo "tend to be relatively faithful."[38] Yet throughout the 1960s, different Broadway

[36]Dick Van Dyke, *My Lucky Life In and Out of Show Business: A Memoir* (New York: Random House, 2011), 104.

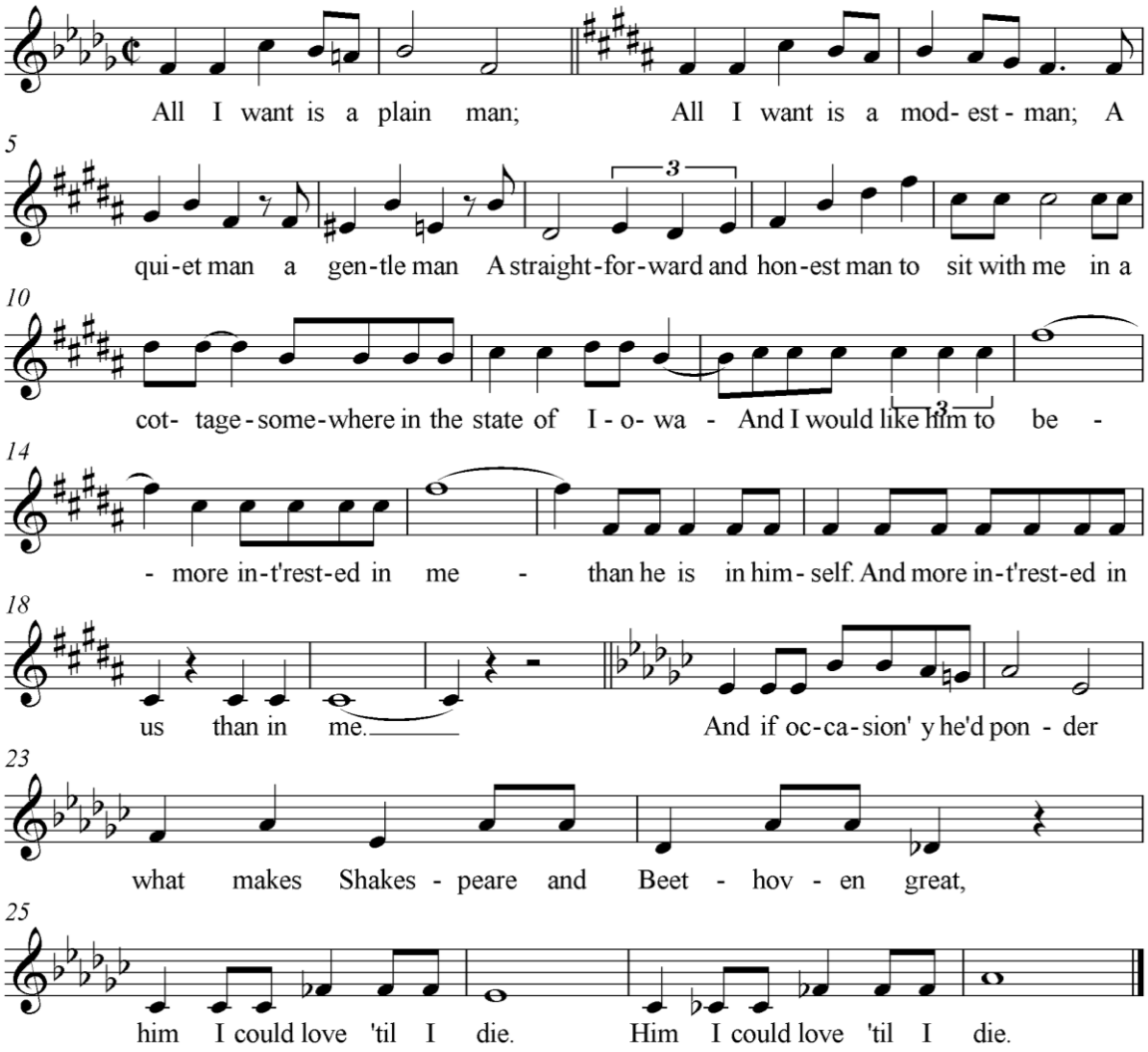
[37]Simon Frith, "Pop Music," *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, ed. Simon Frith, Will Straw, and John Street (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 99.

[38]Geoffrey Block, *Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from* Showboat *to Sondheim and Lloyd Webber*, 2nd Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 153-54.

adaptations handle this issue in myriad ways that often seem tied to other goals, such as ideological conservatism or contemporary relevance. While both *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* were high profile adaptations meant to capitalize on the success of their stage counterparts, they have quite different goals. And their approach to fidelity reflects their attempts to weave a web of nostalgia or connect to current trends. Thus, both in structure and content these films might considered either traditional or innovative in specific ways.

In many ways, the film adaptation of *The Music Man* is slavishly faithful to the original production. Considering Morton Da Costa's theatrical emphasis and own involvement with the original production of Willson's musical, it comes as no surprise that his film version tends towards faithfulness, preserving the spirit of the stage show. In fact, this film is easily the most faithful adaptation discussed in this dissertation. The screenplay preserves the vast majority of the dialogue, allowing for small-scale changes or additions. For instance, the film elaborates slightly in Harold Hill's womanizing ways. He claims that music teachers are "his speciality," saying "I'll just back her into a corner and breathe on her glasses." Similarly, his callous behavior and lack of emotional attachment is revealed soon after when he mistakes Mrs. Shinn for the librarian and moans "Well, I'll do it but I won't like it." The film also adds a scene in which Mrs. Shinn storms into the library to complain to Marian of the "smutty book" *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*. Slight changes or additions such as these serve to elaborate on the musical's original characterizations. Otherwise, very little of the original book is altered. The score also remains almost entirely intact (See Appendix B for full song order). Willson replaces Marian's ode to her dream man "My White Knight" with "Being In Love," which I will discuss further in the section on feminism. The new song keeps a large chunk of "My White Knight" in which Marian describes her ideal man in detail (Example 2.1).

Example 2.1. Shared Vocal Section between "My White Knight" and "Being in Love."[39]



Changes in the order of select scenes and musical numbers does occur at points. The film switches "Pick-a-Little, Talk-a-Little" with "The Sadder But Wiser Girl" (Table 2.1). "Pick-a-Little" is of course an ode to gossip, comparing the matrons of River City to pecking chickens. This point is rather heavy-handedly emphasized in the film with an overhead shot of the women in feather hats followed by a countershot of chickens (Figure 2.1). Throughout the song, the

[39]Unless otherwise noted, all *Music Man* examples are drawn from Meredith Willson, *The Music Man*, Vocal Score (New York: Frank Music Corp. and Rinimer Corporation).

ladies enlighten Harold Hill as to Marian's tarnished reputation in regards to a rumored illicit relationship with the town's main benefactor. This gossip leads Harold to believe Marian is sexually experienced – the "sadder, but wiser girl." Therefore, his song logically develops from the previous revelations and his subsequent assumptions about Marian. "The Shipoopi" and "It's You" are moved to the ice cream sociable later in the plot (Table 2.2). "The Shipoopi" becomes a dance number for the young people while the barbershop quartet's "It's You" accompanies the ladies' Grecian Urns performance. These two numbers beef up the party scene and provide a narratively reasonable place for two non-book numbers. Of course, the quartet's songs often purposefully do not weave into the narrative in order to carry out the extended joke that the group – once formed by Hill – will sing just about anything. "The Shipoopi," however, sung by Marcellus Washburn (Buddy Hackett), works well in the context of a party performance and social dance. It also seems reasonable that the school board quartet, eager to sing at the drop of a hat, would be ready and willing to be an official part of the sociable festivities.

Table 2.1. Song Order: "Pick-a-little" and "Sadder But Wiser."

Stage:	Screen:
The Sadder But Wiser Girl Pickalittle Goodnight Ladies	Pickalittle Goodnight Ladies The Sadder But Wiser Girl

Figure 2.1. "Pick-A-Little:" *a*, Overhead Shot of Ladies' Hats; *b,* Chickens. Screen Captures.

Table 2.2. Song Order: "Shipoopi" and "It's You."

Stage:	Screen:
Act 2	
	Lida Rose
It's You	Will I Ever Tell You?
Shipoopi	Gary, Indiana (reprise)
Pickalittle (reprise)	Shipoopi
Lida Rose	Till There Was You
Will I Ever Tell You?	It's You

Not only do the songs and dialogue closely conform to the original production but the staging in many of the musical numbers does as well. As mentioned above, Morton DaCosta, director of the Broadway production and film, hired the Broadway choreographer Onna White to translate her stage choreography for the musical to film. As a result, many of the musical numbers have a fair amount of staginess despite the use of particularly cinematic techniques throughout. The opening train number "Rock Island" utilizes much of the original stage business and choreography. The camera shows Hill playing cards with a group of traveling salesman with his back to the audience, much as the opening stage directions call for in the script. Of course, the patter in the song imitates the movement and sounds of a train – a clever device onstage (Example 2.2). The exaggerated movement and musical emulation remain in the film but are cut with realistic images and the sound of an actual train (Figure 2.2). This mixture of creative simulation and cinematic realism renders the scene much less effective. The song is also cut in a move which tightens the opening and removes much of the salesmen's complaining about the state of the business (Example 2.3). Yet again, the visuals are preserved. The script indicates that "as each newspaper reader speaks he lowers his paper long enough for his line, then it goes back up before his face."[40] White keeps this bit in the film to add interest to the confined space of a

[40]Meredith Willson, *The Music Man* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons: 1958), 18.

train car. Thus, from the outset of the film, one can plainly see that the film closely conforms to its source.

Example 2.2. "Rock Island" Train Patter.

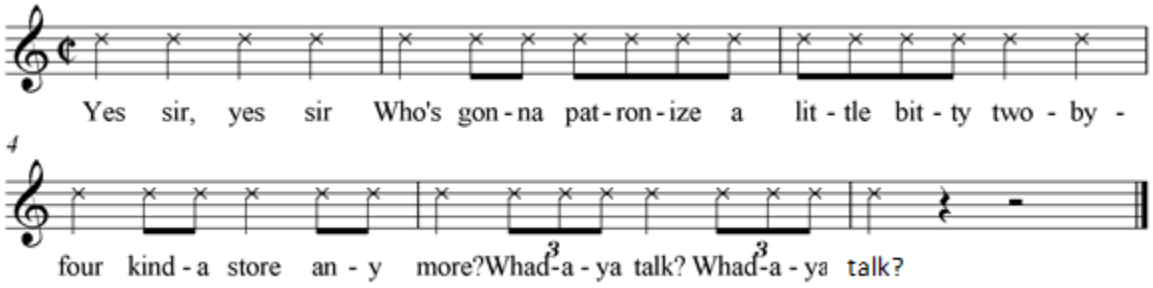
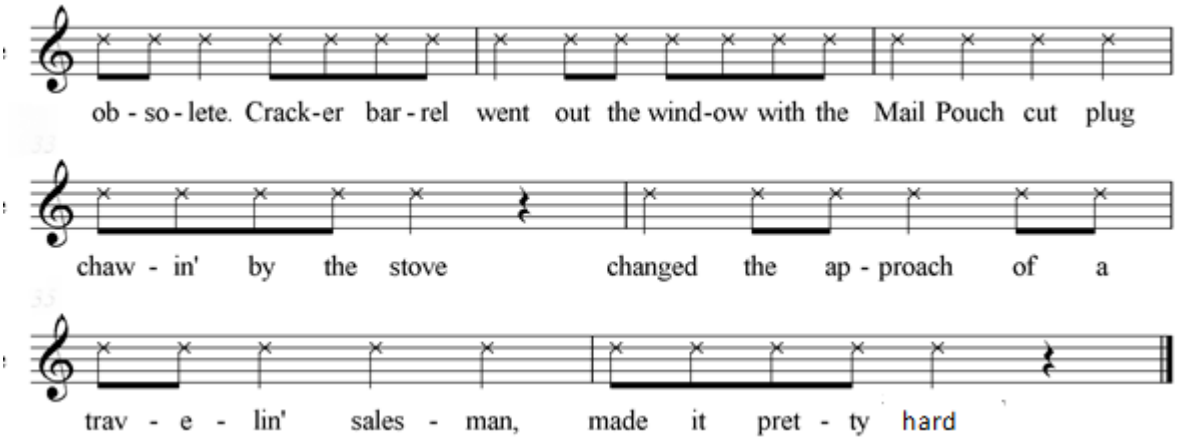


Figure 2.2. "Rock Island" Train Shots.

Example 2.3. Excerpt from "Rock Island" Cut Section.



My White Knight
Rock Island
from Meredith Willson's THE MUSIC MAN
Words and Music by Meredith Willson

DaCosta employs the mixture of staginess and cinematic technique seen in "Rock Island" in many of the musical numbers. The dances in "Seventy-six Trombones," "Sadder but Wiser," and "The Shipoopi" all contain many long shots in which the characters face front and center, giving the dances a very stagey feel (Figure 2.3). These static long shots mirror the effect of the proscenium. Indeed, the frequency of these types of shots give the audience the impression that they are experiencing the dances in much the same way as they would live onstage. DaCosta, however, interpolates other types of shots into these numbers. For instance, "Seventy-six trombones" includes some shots from more interesting angles, positions, and distances. (Figure 2.4). There is also a focus on Tommy Djilas's dancing (Figure 2.5). One image shows Tommy dancing on a platform with the chorus dancers below (Figure 2.5b). The number also concludes with an outdoor march that incorporates more camera movement and takes full advantage of the backlot sets of River City (Figure 2.6). The other large dance number, "The Shipoopi" alternates the static long shots described above with a more active camera that follows the dancers (Figure

2.7). And towards the end of the dance, DaCosta uses several overhead shots (Figure 2.7b). These display the couples' dancing in a wide circle as well as other shapes. The technique here is almost Berkeley in style but with significantly less intricate and decadent outlines.

Figure 2.3. Staged Dances: *a*, "Seventy-six Trombones;" *b*, "Sadder But Wiser Girl;" *c*, "Shipoopi." Screen Captures.

Figure 2.4. "Seventy-six Trombones" Other Shot Types. Screen Captures.

Figure 2.5. Tommy Djilas Dancing: *a*, Beginning to Focus on Tommy; *b*, Tommy on Platform. Screen Captures.

Figure 2.6. "Seventy-six Trombones" Outdoor March.

Figure 2.7. "The Shipoopi:" *a*, Camera Follows Dancers; *b*, Overhead Shot.

The finale, an extended reprise of "Seventy-six trombones," uses the medium to its full extent in order to present a highly romanticized version of Harold Hill's vision of the band. The dull, cheaply made band uniforms transform into bright, professional-looking uniforms before the audience's eyes (Figure 2.8). The kids, who only moments ago played a barely recognizable "Minuet in G," can now flawlessly play "Seventy-six trombones." Similarly, the small twenty-member boys' band grows into a massive band. The finale is comprised of 41 actors, 40 dancers, 150 actual band members, and 500 extras. Crowding onto the Warner's backlot, hundreds of kids march through River City while hundreds more townspeople watch from the sidelines (Figure 2.9). The filmic realization of Hill's dream represents the glorification of Americana and the small town band.

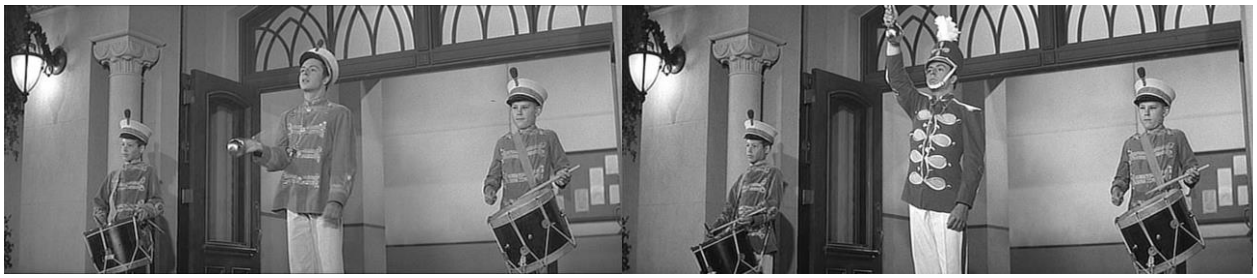


Figure 2.8. Uniform Transformation: *a*, Actual Uniforms; *b*, Professional Uniform on Tommy. Screen Captures.

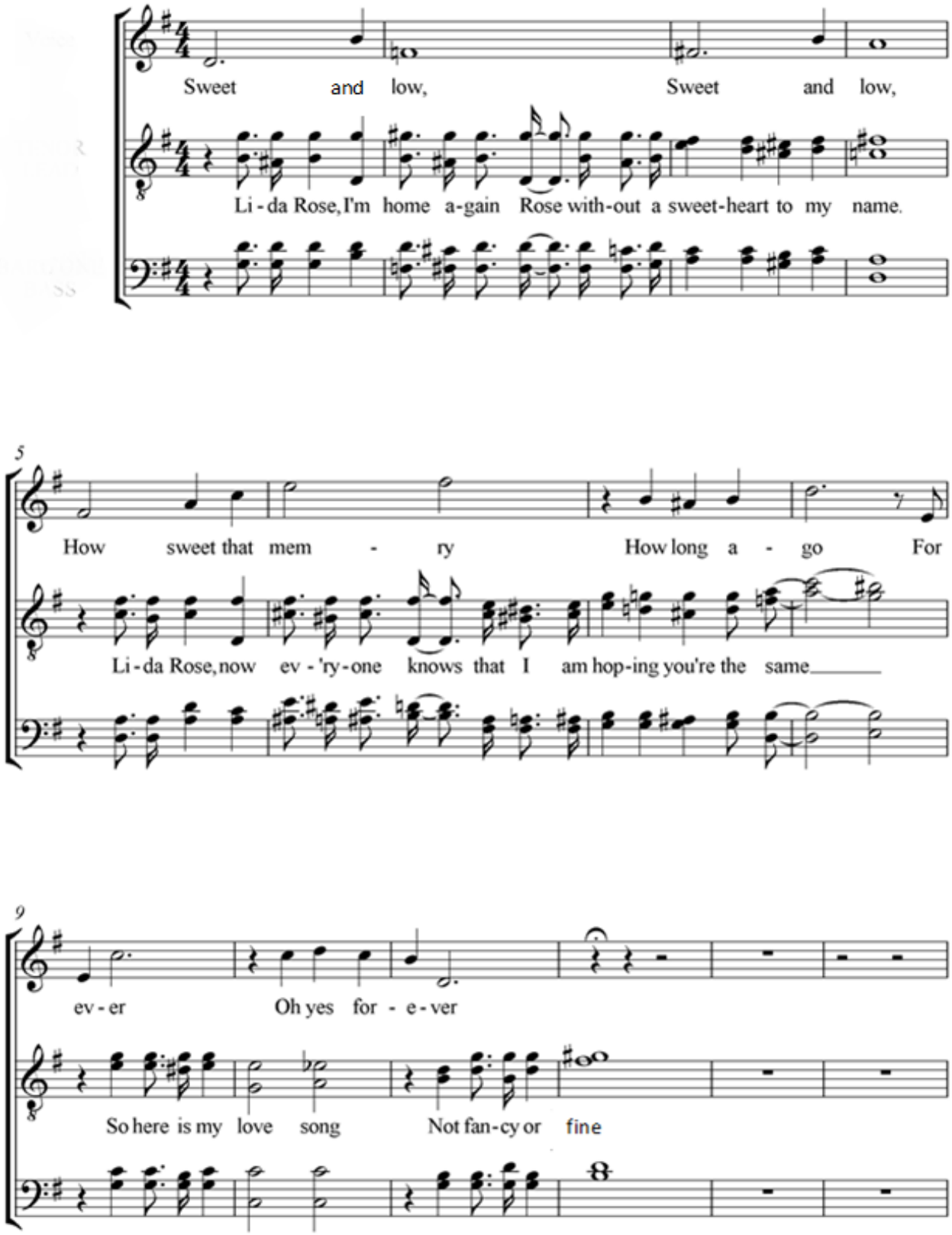
Figure 2.9. Finale Parade: *a*, Leaving the High School; *b*, Marching Through Town. Screen Captures.

Throughout the film, DaCosta uses an iris in/iris out technique to isolate characters. Popular in the silent era, this transition technique had become much rarer by 1962. Apparently, DaCosta greatly favors the iris in and out as he also exploited the technique in *Auntie Mame* (1958). At many points, the iris in/iris out emphasizes Marian or Harold in order to show their growing attraction. For example, after "Being in Love" the background closes in to black, encircling Marian and her mother before fading to black altogether in a scene change (Figure 2.10). While the iris in/iris out makes several appearances in the film, it is used most obviously and consistently in the "Lida Rose/Will I Ever Tell You?" sequence. The iris aids in the transition to and from each part of the double song (Figure 2.10b and 2.10c). The filmmakers also use this technique when the two songs come together to interlock (Example 2.4). The effect of the two circular framed images is quite similar to two spots onstage (Figure 2.10d). In fact, the use of the iris as a transition and means of isolation always emulate the spotlight in the film,

enhancing the staginess of the adaptation as a whole. With Berkeley-esque overhead and iris shots, Da Costa's film seems to engage in a sort of cinematic nostalgia that works together with the more overt American nostalgia depicted.

Figure 2.10. Iris Shots: *a*, "Being In Love;" *b*, "Lida Rose;" *c*, "Will I Ever Tell You?;" *d*, Double Song. Screen Captures.

Example 2.4. Excerpt from "Lida Rose/Will I Ever Tell You?"



Lida Rose
Will I Ever Tell You
from Meredith Willson's THE MUSIC MAN
By Meredith Willson

While *The Music Man* remains faithful to its stage counterpart, *Bye Bye Birdie* makes very significant changes to the script and score. The basic plot outline remains the same: teen idol Conrad Birdie is drafted into the army. As a publicity stunt, he agrees to kiss a member of his fan club on *The Ed Sullivan Show* after singing a song by friend and struggling songwriter Albert Peterson. Albert is engaged to his secretary Rosie but his devotion to his overbearing mother prevents the marriage from taking place. Meanwhile, the girl Conrad will kiss – Kim McAfee – has just been pinned by her boyfriend. Conrad travels to Sweet Apple, Ohio but the televised kiss is ruined by jealous Hugo. However, things end well as Rosie and Albert decide to finally marry and Hugo and Kim renew their teenage romance (See Appendix A for full film version plot). However, many aspects of the narrative alter in the film version and even the plot structure changes.

Significantly, Albert's professional situation changes in the film. In the stage version, Albert Peterson writes all of Birdie's songs and is even credited with discovering him. Success via this one client keeps him from becoming an English teacher, as he wishes. In the film, Albert struggles much more with the music company Almaelou. While the crisis in the stage version is that the company depends solely on Birdie for its income, the film makes clear that Albert is unable to sell his songs. Similar to the original script, the beginning of the film shows Albert lamenting Birdie being drafted. However, this is due to the possibility of the superstar singing a song in an upcoming film ("the title song of his next picture, 'Mumbo Jumbo Gooey Gumbo'") rather than losing existing business. Rather than complaining to a government official on the

phone, he discusses his dire financial situation with his accountant. Albert comically grumbles "In six years, I never sold one lousy song. Maybe they weren't lousy enough." As Rosie makes clear to Ed Sullivan when proposing the publicity kiss, Conrad and Albert have some sort of personal relationship and the singer has wanted to give his friend a break for years. The couple hope to sell the song in order to make enough money to support Albert's mother and be able to finally marry.

While in the stage version, Albert would like to become an English teacher, he is a biochemist in the film. In fact, he even has a degree in biochemistry (Figure 2.11). And as the film makes clear throughout, though not much good as a songwriter, Albert Peterson is a very talented biochemist. Interestingly, Albert's skill in his chosen profession becomes a major plot device. The film adds an extra obstacle to the success of "One Last Kiss" in the form of a Russian ballet performance. The ballet company choreographs a lengthy excerpt with a slow tempo for *The Ed Sullivan Show* that shortens the time allotted for the Birdie slot, thereby cutting the song performance and accompanying kiss. Rosie comes up with a plan to send the ballet into hyper-speed, thus allowing her fiancé's song to be aired. She slips the Russian conductor a compound mixed by Albert meant to speed the production of farm animals. Earlier in the film, the audience has seen the successful trial of Albert's "Speed Up" on the McAfee family turtle (Figure 2.12a). Although Albert is unsure that it will work on humans, the conductor exhibits signs shown by the turtle that the compound works and subsequently conducts the orchestra and by extension dancers at record speed (Figure 2.12b). Conrad can now sing "One Last Kiss" on national television. While the spot fails miserably – Hugo jealously punches Conrad – Albert goes into business with Mr. McAfee to produce "Speed Up." This connection secures his future financially and allows Rosie and Albert to finally marry.

Figure 2.11. Albert's Biochemistry Degree. Screen Capture.

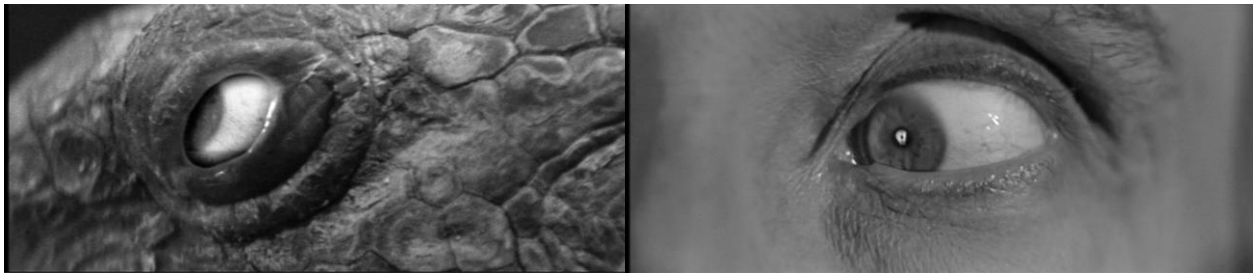


Figure 2.12. Albert's "Speed Up" Formula: *a*, Effect on the Turtle; *b*, Effect on the Russian Conductor. Screen Captures.

As can be seen already in the preceding discussion, the film makes myriad changes to the original while keeping the basic plot outline. This approach greatly impacts the dialogue. Screenwriter Irving Brecher wrote a number of additional scenes, cut several scenes from the original script, moved bits and pieces of dialogue around, and generally altered much of Michael Stewart's original book. The plot structure changes as well regarding *The Ed Sullivan Show*. In the stage production, the recording of the show occurs before the end of Act II, complete with Hugo's ruining the kiss by punching Birdie. In the film, the actual taping of the show occurs at the end – though Hugo's punch is retained. The film also cuts a number of songs and re-orders others (See Table 2.3 and Appendix B). As I will discuss in subsequent sections, many of the musical changes made serve to highlight Ann-Margret as Kim and downplay Albert and Rosie as the primary couple. Since Albert no longer wishes to be an English teacher, the song musicalizing this desire no longer works. Also, the film does not musicalize Albert and Rosie's fight in the songs "What Did I Ever See in Him?" and "Baby, Talk to Me," making their

altercation much easier to overcome. Another example of a re-contextualization that accommodates the plot is the movement of "Put On a Happy Face." Rather than Albert cheering up a random teenage Birdie fan, he sings the song in order to raise the spirits of his long-suffering fiancé.

Table 2.3. *Bye Bye Birdie* Cut Numbers.

An English Teacher – Act I, Scene 1 (Rose with Albert)
Normal American Boy – Act I, Scene 4 (Rose, Albert, and Chorus)
Ballet: How to Kill a Man – Act I, Scene 8 (Rose, Albert, and Company)
What Did I Ever See In Him? – Act II, Scene 1 (Rose and Kim)
Baby, Talk to Me – Act II, Scene 4 (Albert and Quartet)
Spanish Rose – Act II, Scene 8 (Rose)

This scene also represents a handful of musical numbers that employ specifically cinematic techniques. "Put On a Happy Face" becomes Albert's attempt to cheer a despondent Rosie and takes on a somewhat fantastical tone. Hand-drawn smiley faces and even a brief use of sing-a-long lyrics aid Albert in his endeavors (Figure 2.13a and 2.13b). Furthermore, he dances with a transparent, merrier version of Rosie (Figure 2.13c). The actual Rosie and transparent version even interact throughout the number (Figure 2.13d). The whimsical "Hymn for a Sunday Evening" also takes full advantage of the medium. The McAfee family sport church choir robes and sing in front of a celestial blue background (Figure 2.14a). At the end of the song, the background becomes a yellow-tinted trip to the clouds as they sing the praises of Ed Sullivan (Figure 2.14b). The film humorously and unsubtly uses its resources to emphasize the religious parallels. The film also begins and ends with the newly composed title song in which Ann-Margret sings in front of a blue background. This bookend features Ann-Margret, positioning her as the young star before the narrative begins. The use of the plain blue background also provides a focus on her singing, looks, and sex appeal.

Figure 2.13. "Put On a Happy Face:" *a*, Happy Face; *b*, Sing-along Text; *c*, Transparent Rosie; *d*, Transparent and Real Rosie Together. Screen Captures.

Figure 2.14 "Hymn for a Sunday Evening:" *a*, Celestial Background; *b*, Celestial Background with Yellow Tint. Screen Captures.

Nostalgia vs. Contemporaneity

The respective approaches to adaptation in *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* seem quite intimately connected to their disparate settings and contingent goals. Meredith Willson's *The Music Man* is set in the fictional town of River City, Iowa in 1912 and is based on Willson's own childhood memories of Mason City, Iowa.[41] Therefore, nostalgia reigns in his musical and its subsequent adaptation. *Bye Bye Birdie*, on the other hand, is a contemporary parody of American society, including teenage life and the centrality of television to everyday Americans.

[41]Again, see Willson, *But He Doesn't Know the Territory*.

Set in 1912, *The Music Man* cultivates patriotism and local pride rooted in nostalgia. Film scholar Rick Altman characterizes this film as a "folk musical," which "projects the audience into a mythicized version of the cultural past" and focuses on family, community, and values.[42] The categorization works particularly well for this film as it deals explicitly in nostalgia. The featurette accompanying the DVD employs a great deal of nostalgic rhetoric. Shirley Jones claims that the film portrays "the good ole days" and "small-town America at its best" while becoming "part of the fabric of American folklore."[43] Later in the program, she similarly states that the film depicts the "innocence of small town America… [and] adds a touch of whimsy and more than a dash of hope."[44] This rhetoric reinforces the nostalgic aura of the film itself. All of the aspects discussed in the preceding section not only work to depict the simple, positive values of the American Midwest but specifically the Midwest of the past. As Oja puts it, *The Music Man* "spun a gauze of nostalgia, traveling back to the imagined simplicity of the early twentieth century to evoke an America of racial purity and grass-root values."[45] And it is through this "nostalgic mythology," as Knapp calls it, that the film sets out to solve the problems of the present.[46]

Not only do the characters and events of *The Music Man* weave a web of nostalgia (as discussed above) but the town of River City does as well. Willson was involved with the design of River City that was eventually built on three acres of the Warners backlot. The town sets include the footbridge where lovers meet, the fairgrounds, the high school, the soda shop, the stables, and the fire station – all staples in a Midwestern past mythos (Figure 2.15). River City's

[42]Rick Altman, *The American Film Musical* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 272.
[43]Jones, et al., *The Music Man* featurette.
[44]Ibid.
[45]Oja, 13.
[46]Knapp, *National Identity*, 146.

main street evokes the same picture-perfect ideal of a turn-of-the-century American town as Walt Disney's Main Street, U.S.A. of Disneyland parks and the Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World (Figure 2.16). In doing so, *The Music Man* engages in the same popular, romanticized view of small-town Middle America as Disney. Both renditions of "Seventy-six trombones" take full advantage of the idyllic set as the town and the "boys' band" march down the main street. The performances of this song (and especially the finale) tie together multiple elements to create an exciting, highly patriotic, nostalgic imprint of the early twentieth century Midwest.

Figure 2.15. River City Sets: *a*, City Hall; *b*, Billiard Parlor on Main Street; *c*, River City High School; *d*, Madison Public Library. Screen Captures.

Figure 2.16. Main Street, U.S.A., Walt Disney World.[47]

[47]Image from http://www.wdwinfo.com/wdwinfo/guides/magickingdom/mainst-shops.htm. Accessed December 14, 2013. The Disneyland Main Street opened in 1955 and the Disney World version in 1971.

The film version of *Bye Bye Birdie* premiered just three years after the Broadway production. The timing kept much of the original parody relevant while providing even more fodder for satire. The film builds on the already heavy-handed parody of teen culture while adding other aspects of late fifties and early sixties commentary. At the heart of the musical is the character Conrad Birdie – a rock 'n' roll star quite obviously based on Elvis Presley with hints of rockabilly sensation Conway Twitty. The film retains this focus on Birdie. It further includes elements that index teen movies from the fifties and sixties and pop idols. The musical also humorously depicts the impact of rise in television in lives of Middle Americans. Finally, the film adds Cold War commentary in the form of the Russian ballet dancing on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. While the ballet is revered, the Russian characters are lampooned and ultimately made ridiculous by American ingenuity (and by implication, superiority).

As mentioned above, both the stage production and film clearly parody Elvis. The drafting of Birdie into the army directly parallels Elvis actually being drafted in 1958. Moreover, the film includes a news broadcast featuring "special on-the-spot coverage of our current teenage crisis" (Birdie's draft) that shows highlights of the singer's career.[48] The photo montage includes close-ups of a sensuously sneering Conrad, smiling eyes, and leather-clad swiveling hips (Figure 2.17a, b, and c). Intercut with images of Conrad himself are photos of screaming girls, JFK, and a disapproving-looking Frank Sinatra (Figure 2.17d, e, and f). From the outset, the references to Elvis are clear as day. Furthermore, Birdie not only sports leather outfits but a hilariously cheesy gold lamé suit. Elvis first wore a gold lamé suit in 1957, and the cover of the album *50,000 Elvis Fans Can't Be Wrong* exhibits multiple images of Elvis in gold lamé (Figure 2.18).

[48]According to Gilvey, the stage production had a similar montage that played during the Overture as a Prologue to the action, 83.

Figure 2.17. Conrad Birdie Photo Montage: *a*, Conrad Birdie; *b*, Birdie's hips; *c*, Birdie singing; *d*, Screaming Girl; *e*, John F. Kennedy; *f*, Frank Sinatra. Screen Captures.

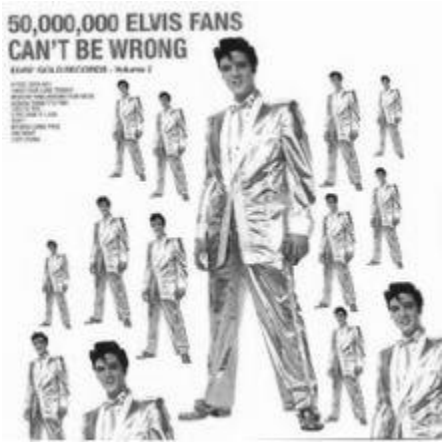


Figure 2.18. ***50,000 Elvis Fans Can't Be Wrong*** **(1957).**

Conrad Birdie's first song, "Honestly Sincere," includes a satirical comment on the popularity of rock 'n' roll superstars such as Elvis as well as claims of sincerity. As mentioned

above, the women of Sweet Apple, Ohio have a fairly violent reaction to Conrad's very presence. He barely sings a phrase before the mayor's wife sinks into a faint, spreading her legs. In a 1964 review of the film, T.J. Ross calls the shots of the mayor's wife "more startling and obscene than anything you will find in the ripest of art films."[49] While hyperbolic, this statement gets at the highly sexualized reactions of the female characters to Conrad. The girls alternate between rapt attention (or dancing later in the song) with screams of delight. Conrad needs only give a look, swivel his hips, or utter a "personalized" direct address in order to elicit screams and fainting spells. By the end of the song, all of women lie on the ground surrounded by their perturbed male counterparts with Conrad unceremoniously standing back at the tops of the steps (Figure 2.19a). The reactions depicted in this musical number, and indeed throughout the film, recall footage of thousands of fans responding in much the same way to their real-life idols such as Elvis. The song itself contains its own commentary. The lyrics assert that Conrad's truly feels and believes in whatever he sings. In a telling lyric, he draws a silly parallel that belies his claim to sincerity:

When I sing about a tree, I really feel that tree.

Yeah, when I sing about a girl, I really feel that girl.

I mean I really feel sincere.[50]

The obvious insincerity of Conrad's performance implies that the discourse of emotional involvement in rock 'n' roll music does not correspond to the reality. Wollman sums up the picture, stating that "the claim of sincerity is made by an overamplified boob in a gold-lamé suit."[51]

[49]T.J. Ross, "*Bye Bye Birdie* review," *Film Quarterly* Vol. 17, No. 3 (Spring 1964), 57.

[50]Michael Stewart, Lee Adams, and Charles Strouse, *Bye Bye Birdie* (New York: DBS Publications, Inc., 1958), 54.

[51]Wollman, 18.

Tied up with the notion of sincerity is that of authenticity. The music, particularly the instrumental accompaniment, reinforces the atmosphere of disingenuousness and artificiality in Conrad's performance. Notably, the original script and production stills indicate that Conrad does not play the guitar in this song. Instead, he "looks at guitar men. They strike a chord and Conrad sings."[52] In the film, Conrad begins the song with his flashy gold guitar in hand (Figure 2.19b). During the opening of the song, he strums some simple chords as accompaniment. However, he only plays seven chords before handing off the guitar to an adoring fan to hold. This action thus leaves no onscreen person to play the instrument supposedly accompanying this song. The "guitar men" do remain on the sidelines to provide an on-screen semblance of instrumental accompaniment. However, an off-screen, studio orchestra accompanies the singer. Similarly, onstage the ensemble part was rendered by the pit orchestra. The ensemble features percussion, bass guitar, and a brass section quite prominently. The prominence of the brass in the orchestration belies the visuals as only the two guitarists are shown onscreen. At the end of the song, Conrad ostensibly begins playing guitar again. However, unlike the beginning, the trumpet continues to dominate the mix. Rather than playing a song and espousing actual sincerity, Conrad simply affects the anonymous girls around him. The effect is at odds with the rhetoric of Conrad as a homegrown rock 'n' roll musician.

Figure 2.19. "Honestly Sincere:" *a,* End of Song; *b*, Birdie's Guitar. Screen Captures.

[52]Michael Stewart, et al., 54.

While both the stage and film versions contain an Elvis "rock 'n' roll" character, only the film offers an alternative vision of teen culture in the guise of Hugo Peabody. This character, played by Michael J. Pollard on Broadway, does not sing in the stage production. In the film, Hugo sings several songs with his paramour Kim and is played by teen idol Bobby Rydell. As discussed in "The Players" section, Rydell has a contemporary pop style similar to that of Frankie Avalon or Bobby Darin. Robert Walser states that "white 'teen idols'…defused the dangerous sexuality of Presley, Little Richard, and Chuck Berry."[53] While Conrad Birdie was a character depicting a teen idol, Hugo Peabody was played by an actual teen idol. Thus, Hugo/Bobby becomes a counterpoint to Birdie's raw sexuality. He provides a more wholesome alternative that still reflects popular teen culture. His singing highlighted in songs such as "One Boy" and "Rosie" and swinging pop style showcased in "A Lot of Livin' to Do" offset the swaggering Conrad. Hugo Peabody, as played by Rydell, proves to be the safer yet still highly desirable choice for Kim.

In fact, the casting of Bobby Rydell and his enhanced role, along with the heightened role of Ann-Margret as Kim, gives the film a greater focus on the younger stars and teen culture. In the stage production, the narrative and musical focus is on Albert Peterson and Rose Alvarez. However, their roles are reduced somewhat in the film. As a result, the teens become more integral to the plot and especially the musical fabric of the film. The musical number "A Lot of Livin' to Do" reflects the increased importance of the teens. In the stage production, the song features Conrad and Kim as the two seek out a way to get their kicks. In the film, Birdie indeed begins the song. However, it soon morphs into a competition between Kim and Hugo to prove that they are over one another – although they both still clearly care. Conrad begins singing

[53]Richard Middleton, et al. "Pop." *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed November 15, 2013, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/46845.

surrounded by teenage girls who snap and dance along with him. Unaffected, Kim sits pouting at a table with friends. However, she rouses herself when Hugo walks in and tries to talk to her, taking up Conrad's anthem. When Ann-Margret sings, the tempo slows down considerably and brass instruments come forward in the texture. Her rendition is sultry and sexy. She flirts with nearly every boy in the club – touching them in some fashion – while barely taking her eyes off Hugo (Figure 2.20a). Hugo then retaliates. He interrupts Kim by drumming on a table, reminiscent of the "cool" bongo players in teen films such as *Beach Party* (1963). Rydell picks the tempo back up in a swinging version of the song that rouses the other teens to dance.

An extended dance sequence for Hugo, Kim, Conrad, and the town teenagers then breaks out. The fighting couple's competition becomes a site for a teenage dance party. As the song gives way to dancing, the teens do a stylized, highly choreographed version of popular dance scenes in other films that feature youth culture (Figure 2.20b). For example, one dance step appears to be a modified bunny hop (Figure 2.20c). In fact, the entire musical number has much in common with the dance sequences and song "Don't Stop Now" from 1963's *Beach Party*. Albeit the Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello vehicle depicts beach culture and includes much less obvious choreographed dance moves in favor of straightforward fad dancing such as the twist and go-go dancing. Conrad rejoins the group, infusing the group dance with a sophisticated New York mambo/cha-cha flair (Figure 2.20d). The lights dim and turn red to add an exotic atmosphere during this portion (Figure 2.20d). The group mambo recalls *West Side Story*'s Dance at the Gym sequence, thus referencing another film that explores aspects of youth culture. It also highlights Conrad's "danger" and big city mentality in relation to the Sweet Apple kids. Ultimately, Kim and the other youths reject Conrad's version for their own sixties-inflected

routine, which mirrors the rejection of Conrad himself for the more wholesome small-town Hugo.

Figure 2.20. "A Lot of Livin' To Do:" *a*, Kim Flirts; *b*, Teen Dance; *c*, Modified Bunny Hop; *d*, "Cha-cha." Screen Captures.

Not only does the film stress the teenaged characters and their culture but it also comments on contemporary issues in other ways as well. Integral to both the stage and film versions is the rise of television's importance in the lives of Middle Americans. *The Ed Sullivan Show* provides the catalyst for the entire narrative. In the film, Ed Sullivan himself has a small role; he meets with Rosie and later appears during the recording of his show. *Bye Bye Birdie* narrativizes the impact of television on Americans. Of course, the very use of the show as a promotional gimmick implies that TV and specifically *The Ed Sullivan Show* influence sales. The song "Hymn for a Sunday Evening" humorously places a religious element to the show – the McAfees "worship" Ed Sullivan on Sundays, fulfilling the traditional role of church services. The addition of the Moscow ballet also lends topicality to the proceedings. Scenes that feature Russian people both play on stereotypes and politics. In the midst of the Cold War, the film version of *Bye Bye Birdie* makes light of the tensions between the two countries while implying

American superiority. The Moscow ballet arbitrarily changes their selection to a slower dance that will cut Birdie's big number on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Quips by Lynde, such as "if Eisenhower couldn't handle the Russians, how's Albert gonna talk to 'em" relay the belief that the Russians are intractable. Both the manager and conductor drink copious amounts of "wodka." As Albert pleads, the manager asks "Who sent you here? Senator Goldwater?" then refuses to cut any because of the "historical significance" of the ballet. Political figures such as Stalin, Khrushchev, and Lenin pepper the conversation. During the actual taping of the show, Albert's "Speed Up" formula makes the dancers look ridiculous; the film is actually sped up to create the effect. The audience in the studio and at home all laugh uproariously as the Soviet delegates become increasingly angry. Two shots of a portrait of Khrushchev as the ballet continues reveals a change (Figure 2.21). The ambassador fears that Khrushchev himself will be angry at this slight to Russian culture. Ultimately, the addition of the Moscow ballet and minor Russian characters serves to make them look silly and allow Albert and Rosie to employ their American ingenuity to get their way.

Figure 2.21. Photographs of Khrushchev: *a*, Normal Photograph; *b*, Humorous Upset Version. Screen Captures.

The presumed musical styles of each film corresponds with its relationship with the past or present. Namely, *The Music Man* explicitly references band music while *Bye Bye Birdie* trades in clichés from rock 'n' roll. In *The Music Man*, the song "Seventy-six trombones" specifically calls to mind the marching band music of Sousa and others. Raymond Knapp observes that the

song "balances its allegiances to the Tin Pan Alley song-format (AABA but with a sixteen-bar A) with traditions associated with the march."[54] Knapp goes on to describe how Hill's rousing march connects with both "Goodnight, My Someone" and "Iowa Stubborn." In this way, the song functions in a particularly theatrical way as it has narrative purpose. Knapp states that "the march-song not only helps forge the romantic connection between the two leads, but also provides a subtle layer to its more obvious point, which is to provide a marching anthem to galvanize River City into becoming a genuine community. Thus, embedded within the anthem are the musical personalities of the town itself."[55] In the film, the expanded orchestration in the finale version of this song especially emphasizes the grand, nostalgic power of a marching band. Warner Bros. had the resources to bring in the marching band from the University of Southern California for the final scene in order to create the idealized sound that Hill envisions. Furthermore, the inclusion of the barbershop quartet school board sung by actual quartet The Buffalo Bills adds more period flair to the musical.

Similar to *The Music Man*, *Bye Bye Birdie* employs its chosen American music – rock 'n' roll – in only a few songs. As mentioned above, Wollman notes that the musical "resorted to particularly exaggerated parodies of rock 'n' roll when it borrowed from the style at all."[56] She explores the rock 'n' roll elements in Conrad Birdie's two songs, "Honestly Sincere" and "One Last Kiss." Again like in *The Music Man*, Birdie's songs contain a mixture of typical Tin Pan Alley aspects (e.g. form and harmony) and those drawn from rock 'n' roll (e.g. instrumentation, melody, use of amplification). However, the imitation of rock 'n' roll bands in the instrumentation becomes muddled in a Hollywood film with access to large studio ensembles. In

[54]Knapp, *National Identity*, 147.
[55]Ibid., 148.
[56]Wollman, 17.

my above analysis of "Honestly Sincere," I mention the prominence of the brass section. Of course, the original score includes brass but not at the same magnitude as in the film version. In the original cast recording, the smaller ensemble has more of a rock 'n' roll band sound in which the guitar, bass guitar, and brass instruments all come through. The film version, on the other hand, includes more brass instruments. As a result, the trumpet and the rest of the brass section come to forefront. The ensemble here no longer resembles a band that you might see at a rock 'n' roll concert but a large orchestra that plays popular music. Wollman discusses the song "The Telephone Hour" as perhaps the cleverest use of rock 'n' roll stylistic elements in the show. She identifies such elements as syncopation, instrumentation, walking bass line, emphasis of backbeats, and a doo wop ending as being drawn from rock 'n' roll. She also points to the raw quality of the vocals. However, typical Broadway elements also come through. Wollman observes that the song "is not heavily amplified. Typically lush Broadway orchestration fills out the accompaniment of the piece…The many overlapping vocal parts are often more harmonically complex than they tend to be in early rock 'n' roll, and even in doo-wop."[57] Despite the fact that the vocal production is slightly more polished and again there is a larger ensemble, the film retains many of these elements. Therefore, the song places the introduction of the Sweet Apple teenage community in their own sound world of popular music while maintaining the musical theater style.

The American Midwest and Conservatism

Despite their many differences, *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* share a number of fundamental similarities. At their core, they espouse traditional nuclear family values that are specifically associated with the Midwest. Although in different time periods, both films are set in

[57]Wollman, 19-20.

fictional Midwestern towns, *The Music Man* in River City, Iowa and *Bye Bye Birdie* in Sweet Apple, Ohio. Both depict idealized versions of small-town Middle America and imply that the innocence and wholesome nature of the people extends to real life small-town America. This emphasis seems to have more of a place in a Hollywood film than a Broadway stage as Hollywood has a larger, more diverse audience. Unlike Broadway, which has a more limited audience of New Yorkers and tourists that can afford to attend a Broadway musical, Hollywood films have the ability to extend across the country in large expensive theaters to small one-screen theaters. In the case of *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie*, the films have a better chance to be seen by the very people that they depict. Together, these two films present a specific view of America – one that is socially conservative in nature and rests on the shoulders of small-town Midwesterners. Furthermore, this view is white-washed in relation to the ethnically diverse depiction of America as evidenced in film musicals such as *West Side Story*. In their emphasis on family values, nationalism and regionalism, and an ambiguous relationship with both sex and feminism, these films reveal a quite traditional vision of American life.

Scholarship in musicology, media and cultural studies looks at the regionalism within both *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie*. In his article on film musicals depicting the Midwest, Edward Recchia places these films in the larger context of the meanings of Midwestern tradition and family values in musical films. Recchia claims that all of the films that he discusses "utilize the social connotations of the locale to develop its theme, affirming what today might be negatively viewed as the naiveté of the stereotypical Midwesterner to be instead a virtue."[58] Recchia's article shows these two films to be part of a lineage that includes *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944), and the Doris Day and Gordon MacRae musicals from the

[58]Edward Recchia, "There's No Place Like Home: The Midwest in American Film Musicals," *Midwest Quarterly* 39:2 (Winter 1998), 205.

early fifties. Roberta Freund Schwartz specifically explores the Iowa-ness of the beloved musical. Noting Iowans embrace it as a "source of state pride and a musical ambassador to the rest of the world," Schwartz explores the musical and textual aspects that reflect its Iowan character, which are shared by the Broadway and Hollywood versions.[59] She highlights Willson's focus on the sound of language in the book, lyrics, and especially the use of "speak-song." While Schwartz proclaims that the regionally specific quality of the musical connects to the people it represents, the Midwestern aesthetic and values also have the potential to relate to a wider audience.

Unlike *West Side Story*, both *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* depict multiple generations and close-knit families. *The Music Man*'s Paroo family includes the widow Paroo, older sister Marian, and young child Winthrop. Though obviously struggling with the death of the patriarch, the family remains extremely close. Marian's mother pushes her daughter towards marriage yet the two clearly share a great deal of affection, and Marian confides in her boisterous mother. At the beginning of *The Music Man*, Winthrop suffers from the lack of a father figure. However, the addition of Harold Hill implies that this family will now be complete: Marian will no longer be a spinster; the couple will help to raise Winthrop; and Mrs. Paroo will represent the older generation. In fact, the film more specifically highlights not simply children but their parents as well. In an added scene, the film reveals Hill's sales pitch to several of the parents in town. He draws on their parental pride and ropes them in by claiming that the various kids' unique musical abilities must surely run in the family. Hill, thus, uses the parent-child relationship as the centerpiece of his con, making explicit the connection between the family members. *Bye Bye Birdie* also focuses on family. While the film underlines teenage culture, the

[59]Schwartz, 31.

entire McAfee family figures prominently. Wollman observes that the musical "gently poked fun at teens and adults alike;" the show "refused to side with generation over the other, but that they instead parodied all of its character's equally, and with affection."[60] This remains true in the film. Kim's pretensions to maturity and her father's absurdity and constant complaining are both sources of humor. Furthermore, the McAfees represent a traditional nuclear family, consisting of a mother, father, daughter, and son. They appear as the typical American family. And despite their squabbling, the McAfees love and take care of one another. As such, this film, along with *The Music Man*, seeks to promote an ideal of a nuclear family with traditional roles and conventional values.

The Music Man blends nationalism with regionalism in its depiction of small-town America and its values. Chase Bringardner theorizes the relationship between the nation and region as constructed in musical theater. He claims that "in defining a nation or region, one reorders and recontextualizes space, memory, and history through a recurring process of forgetting and discovery, resulting in a politically charged construct specific to one's contemporary historical moment."[61] He posits that while nation and region are often considered in opposition, the two ways of dealing with geography and identity can in fact work together to create a multi-layered sense of identity. Bringardner sees musicals as "chances to reflect on regional concerns and identities as they relate to ideas of nation."[62] And indeed, region and nation are inextricably intertwined in *The Music Man*.

[60]Wollman, 16 and 17.

[61]Chase A. Bringardner, "The Politics of Region and Nation in American Musicals," in *The Oxford Handbook of the American Musical*, ed. Raymond Knapp, Mitchell Morris, and Stacy Wolf (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 226.

[62]Bringardner, 228.

The musical makes a point of emphasizing the setting of Iowa – a Midwestern small-town setting. The song "Iowa Stubborn" explicitly outlines the presumed characteristics of Iowans. It also contains verbal markers of the Midwest such as crops, picnics, and cold winters. As Schwartz points out, the music also characterizes the townspeople. She contends that Willson writes stubborn music for the stubborn people of River City in the ensemble numbers. She states that

> The music itself is stubborn: the incessant repetition of a small number of musical and rhythmic motives creates a piece that seems as intractable as the folks who sing it. The melody contains five basic gestures: (1) descending minor seconds, (2) descending thirds, (3) scale fragments outlining a) ascending thirds, and b) descending fourths, sometimes combined into longer sequences and (4) ascending leaps of a sixth. It is just as tightly circumscribed rhythmically: eighth note triplets, strings of evenly articulated eighth notes and dotted eighth-sixteenth note pairs dominate.[63]

Furthermore, both the stage version and the film recreate a live image of Grant Wood's iconic "American Gothic" (Figure 2.22), a painting renowned for its vision of small-town Americana. Throughout the dialogue and lyrics, references to Iowa and the Midwest abound – never letting the audience forget where *The Music Man* takes place. The rousing chorus number "The Wells Fargo Wagon" in particular clearly and rather humorously displays the Midwestern accents of the townspeople. Both the stage production and the film emphasize the simplicity of small-town life. Indeed, all of the characters, with the obvious exception of Harold Hill, might be seen as icons of small-town Midwestern folk: the bumbling but good-natured Mayor and his wife; the bickering school board; and of course, the prim librarian spinster-lady. The action of the show also centers around town activities such as the Fourth of July festivities and the ice cream sociable. These types of events help to fuse the regional and national and further enhance the small-town America atmosphere of the film.

[63]Schwartz, 37.

Figure 2.22. American Gothic Recreation. Screen Capture.

While *The Music Man* specifically depicts a town in Iowa, the setting evokes other rural American musicals and deals with the same type of messages. Specifically, the musicals of Rodgers and Hammerstein explore rural America (of the past) and its values in *Oklahoma!* (1943) and *Carousel* (1945). Both of these musicals contain similar community events as the Independence Day activities and ice cream sociable in the box social of *Oklahoma!* and the clambake of *Carousel*. These events provide a diegetic space for community building – an important task in the Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals and in Willson's musical and central to Altman's definition of the "folk musical."[64] In *The Music Man*, the charisma and vision of Harold Hill brings together the community even as he becomes part of it. Knapp discusses Hill's use of music as a means of bringing the town together. For example, he introduces the bickering school board to singing and the quartet subsequently becomes inseparable. Knapp also relates the community-building agenda to contemporary issues. He asserts that "a nostalgic mythology of emerging community set in the past serves both to reassure a troubled America that its problems are manageable, and to goad it out of its lethargic smugness…to recognize the energizing power of community-based feeling and activity."[65]

[64]Altman, *American Musical*, 309.
[65]Knapp, *National Identity*, 146-7.

Rick Altman uses *The Music Man* as a prime example of his theory of how a dual-focus narrative parallels the larger community resolution in film musicals. Altman notes that Hill represents the traits often associated with the masculine such as wandering, promiscuity, creativity, and an emphasis on entertainment while Marian represents a sedentary lifestyle, virginity, and work ethic. He claims that the film "refuses to decide between the diametrically opposed values represented by Robert Preston and Shirley Jones" instead their "value structures merge."[66] In the end, neither subsumes the other and the couple "provides a model for the coexistence of these seemingly mutually exclusive values."[67] Moreover, the ability for Harold and Marian to "merge" so successfully allows for the community to come together as well. Like *Oklahoma!*'s Curly and Laurie before them, the romantic couple stands in for the larger community and facilitates its formation.

As the above discussion implies, the act of community building becomes the resolution for isolationism. Both Knapp and Oja examine the fear of outsiders and isolationist attitude of the River City townspeople. Knapp states that before Hill infiltrates the town, River City is "lethargic, dysfunctional, and isolationist."[68] Oja connects the fear of outsiders depicted to a number of contemporary anxieties, including the emerging civil rights and feminist movements. Furthermore, by 1962 the Cold War was at its height. The debacle of 1961's Bay of Pigs Invasion was fresh in the minds of Americans, and tensions would soon come to a head with the Cuban Missile Crisis later that year. The isolationism and fear of outsiders depicted in the film reflects both national concerns (as outlined above) and regional ones. The culture of the rural Midwest as largely agricultural and consisting of towns in which relatively few people leave

[66]Altman, *American Musical*, 53.
[67]Ibid., 54.
[68]Knapp, *National Identity*, 146.

cultivates a mistrust of difference. Furthermore, the actual geographic isolation of many rural areas of the Midwest, especially during the early twentieth century, certainly does much to promote these outlooks. This context fostered a fear for all types of outsiders that the musical, in both its stage and film versions, resolves through community building, affirmation of the melting pot ideology, and of course patriotism (the latter two of which I discuss further below).

The Music Man also encourages civic pride and patriotism as key markers of regionalism and nationalism. From the outset, the Fourth of July festivities bespeak an intertwining of these elements with local "talent" on showcase for patriotic purpose. The focus on a brass band further brings these elements together. Knapp asserts that band music is "a hallmark of American music-making and an important source of civic pride."[69] Wind and brass bands have roots in the military, and the typical band uniforms and marching with precision both derive from this tradition. As Richard Crawford explores, the wind band evolved from military bands to civic bands, eventually progressing to professional bands with Patrick S. Gilmore and John Philip Sousa. Crawford observes that local amateur band traditions "stand in a line that began in the 1700s with local militia bands, blossomed during the Civil War into a national patriotic movement, and continued as an amateur pastime even after an elite professional strain of wind band performance emerged."[70] During the period between the Civil War and World War I, local bands provided entertainment at numerous functions in towns and villages across America and were a great source of civic pride. The film highlights the latter characteristic in a bit of added dialogue that plays on the sense of pride that many towns felt towards their local bands. Mayor Shinn and the school board members dreamily praise the River City band after Hill first weaves his spell in the rousing "Seventy-six trombones." The mayor even claims, "I'll stake my River

[69]Knapp, *National Identity*, 147.
[70]Richard Crawford, *America's Musical Life: A History* (New York: Norton, 2001), 453-5.

City band against any town west of Chicago" despite the fact that there is no band yet. In addition, the sense of pride and patriotic fervor brought on by Hill's vision indicates a specifically American version of nationalism. Knapp observes that for Americans, nationalism includes a sort of "super-charged patriotism" and a sense of authenticity that finds its "highest value in simple goodness, most often in rural or small-town settings."[71] It seems clear that *The Music Man* trades on this sense of nationalism, particularly in the final scene in which Harold Hill's dream becomes reality through cinematic magic (Figure 2.9).

The film version of *Bye Bye Birdie* – even more than the stage production – presents a highly socially conservative viewpoint, particularly in regards to sex, teenage behavior, and family values. It espouses the ideal that Recchia points out as central to the depiction of the Midwest in film musicals, that "it is precisely the *lack* of excitement and sophistication that has become a virtue itself for the Midwest: Midwestern dullness has represented for the nation a kind of reassuring steadiness of human virtue and human values."[72] The film depicts a relatively contemporary setting and parodies teen culture. And as I will lay out the next section, it consciously strives to do so in an extremely naïve manner even as it hints at darker or raunchier modes of behavior in both young people and adults. And as Recchia's statement implies, much of the innocence derives from the perception of the Midwest. In this way, the film works on a similar level as *The Music Man*.

In shifting the emphasis to the teen couple, the film also stresses family. In both versions, the McAfee family dynamic is a source of humor as well as providing a representative example of a typical Midwestern family. The McAfees have two children: teenage Kim and younger son Randolph. Both children cause their parents concern, which is humorously lamented in Harry

[71]Knapp, *National Identity*, 121-2.
[72]Recchia, 202.

McAfee's "Kids" (sung in the film with Mae Peterson and also featuring Randolph and Albert). As mentioned above, Kim constantly tries to assert her independence and adulthood. She calls her parents by their first names and dyes her hair blonde in one scene – although after her parents object, it miraculously turns back to red with no explanation. Randolph proves to be a precocious child whose science experiments often result in explosions. The song "Kids" musicalizes parents' inability to understand youth culture while romanticizing their own youth (particularly in the case of Mr. McAfee). Despite the squabbling, the McAfees are shown to be a supportive, happy family. Indeed, the fundamental virtuousness of Kim implies that Harry and Doris McAfee are doing it "right" as ideal 1950s parents. As depicted in the film especially, the McAfee family represents wholesome family values typical of the Midwest. As in *The Music Man*, *Bye Bye Birdie* promotes an ideology that considers small Midwestern towns as upholding conservative ideals, now in a contemporary package as opposed to a nostalgic one. Despite moving forward in time, the two depictions of Midwestern life hold a remarkable similarity.

Similar to *The Music Man*, *Bye Bye Birdie* seeks to draw on ideas of the Midwest. The fictional town of Sweet Apple, Ohio, sets the scene for the events of the film. The majority of the outdoor scenes of the town use Universal's backlot to create a picture-perfect 1950s Midwestern small town (Figure 2.23).[73] Conrad Birdie's arrival in town particularly showcases the Sweet Apple sets. The sequence begins as a large group of teenage girls march through the school yard singing "We Love You, Conrad!." Their march is intercut with parallel shots of the boys singing "We Hate You, Conrad!" at the same time. The film adds the male perspective with the change of lyrics:

We hate you, Conrad! Oh yes, we do!

[73]The Courthouse Square backlot is perhaps most famous for its use in *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962).

We don't hate anyone as much as you.

Your singing makes us say "p.u."

Oh Conrad, we hate you!

The scene culminates in an argument between Kim and Hugo that reveals their youth and inexperience and occurs underneath a tree. It then cuts to the square outside town hall for the welcoming ceremony and "Honestly Sincere" (Figure 2.23a). In some ways, the event resembles the small-town activities depicted in *The Music Man* – though on a larger scale. As crowds gathers, a band plays the trio section of John Philip Sousa's "Semper Fidelis." The use of this march clearly marks Sweet Apple as typically Middle American, drawing on the same ideas as *The Music Man*. The town hall building features wide steps and columns with a large square in front of it (Figure 2.23b). Red and white banners can be seen all over town for the occasion. Conrad's dramatic motorcycle entrance also showcases several town storefronts (Figure 2.23c). The bewildered mayor of Sweet Apple attempts to give a speech that presents Conrad with a key to the town (a quaint over-sized golden key). Conrad's performance of "Honestly Sincere" utilizes the idyllic town square as he drives small-town women of all ages to swoon and faint (Figure 2.19a).

Of course, Conrad disrupts the idyllic innocence of Sweet Apple, Ohio, as the very symbol of teenage rebellion, rock 'n' roll, and sex come to town. From the very moment he enters, Conrad Birdie is a clear contrast from the sweetly naïve teenagers in town. His motorcycle is distinctly different from the older family vehicles seen earlier (Figure 2.24a). And the song "Honestly Sincere" shows his sex appeal and devastating effect on women. As mentioned in a previous section, the mayor's wife faints with her legs wide open in a not-so-subtle fit of sexual arousal (Figure 2.24b). Her shocked husband simultaneously tries to close her

legs and rouse her. By the end of the song, no female has remained immune (Figure 2.19a), and the ground is littered with passed out women. When staying with the McAfees, Conrad swills beer and parks his motorcycle indoors. He refers to Saturday as "my real tense night" while swiveling his hips and then growls. When Mrs. Peterson suggests she and Conrad go for a drive, he exclaims "Man, I hope I never get that tense!" From these oblique references, it is clear that Conrad is sexually active and looking to blow off some steam. As a "wild" outsider from New York City, his lifestyle represents the antithesis of the Sweet Apple folk. As a surrogate for Elvis Presley and urban rock 'n' roll star, the possibility of a racially charged sexuality also arises. Significantly, his presence actually has less impact on the Sweet Apple teens than in the stage version. In the original script, the song "A Lot of Livin' to Do" convinces Kim and the other girls that they want to run away with Conrad and live the high life (much to his chagrin). The youths in the film are not so corruptible. They dance enthusiastically to "A Lot of Livin' to Do" but are not seduced by Conrad's lifestyle. In fact, the extended song and dance sequence only serves to make Kim miss Hugo more. Rather than being seduced by the urban lifestyle, Recchia asserts that the opposite happens. He observes that "once in the atmosphere of Sweet Apple, the New Yorkers begin to change."[74] While Conrad Birdie temporarily injects some of the wild behavior of the big city, the Midwestern wholesomeness of Sweet Apple easily prevails.

[74]Recchia, 212.

Figure 2.23. Sweet Apple Sets: *a*, Town Square; *b*, City Hall; *c*, Storefronts. Screen Captures.

Figure 2.24. Conrad and His Effect: *a*, Birdie's Entrance; *b*, Mayor's Wife. Screen Captures.

Whitewashing

Significantly, both films also contain a certain amount of whitewashing. They imply that the wholesome, ideal America centered around the Midwest is a predominately white America. The typical American dream that they espouse is in direct contrast to the depiction in *West Side Story* – a film that calls the American dream into question. Furthermore, these two films do not feature prominent minority characters as in *West Side Story* but instead focus on the white middle class.

Knapp and Oja both touch on race and ethnicity in *The Music Man*, though focusing on different aspects. Knapp notes the traces of ethnic inflection through the Paroo family and

Tommy Djilas. Tommy is a young man from the wrong side of the tracks and most likely a first-generation American from an Eastern European immigrant family. After Tommy has been established as a prankster, setting off a firecracker near Mrs. Shinn during the 4th of July exercises, the town's authorities round him up. The Mayor calls him "ya wild kid, ya" then in aside to a school board member asserts that "his father is one of them 'Nithulanians' south o' town." In the script, Tommy's father is identified as a "day laborer" not a "Nithulanian." This statement makes clear that prejudice, rather than simply Tommy's mischievous behavior, is the Mayor's objection to Tommy going steady with his daughter. Mayor Shinn's penchant for malapropisms makes Tommy's exact ethnicity unclear but does establish his immigrant status. Significantly, this added line confers upon Tommy an extraordinarily similar ethnic profile as that of the Jet members from *West Side Story* as first-generation American-born kids of European immigrants. Read in comparison, Tommy's ethnic status is completely unthreatening. Knapp claims that the "Paroo family's Irishness is part of what sets them apart from the community, as not fully integrated even by 1912."[75] However, by the time the movie was made, both the Paroos and Tommy Djilas would easily be considered white. At the very least, they are clearly European and therefore, a much more established and assimilated immigrant group by the early sixties than say the Puerto Ricans of *West Side Story*.

And the musical enacts this assimilation during the course of its events; Harold Hill brings Tommy Djilas and the Paroo family safely into the fold even as he enters it himself. Knapp contends that "given the show's inclusionist trajectory, it may also be seen to embrace America's melting-pot ideology."[76] At the same time, the film comes across as overwhelmingly white, particularly in the context of the emerging civil rights movement for African Americans.

[75]Knapp, *National Identity*, 148.
[76]Ibid., 148.

Indeed, as Oja observes, "the all-white signifiers of *The Music Man* are emblazoned in its identity."[77] She problematizes the lack of African Americans while admitting that this might be a byproduct (at least in part) of the early twentieth-century Iowa setting – a state that still has a relatively low black population. Schwartz mentions that Iowa was "settled largely by German, Scottish, Irish and Bohemian immigrants."[78] Thus, the film contains markers of ethnicity but not race.

Interestingly, the "Indian performance" of Eulalie Mackecknie Shinn and the "Wan Ta Ye" girls remains underexplored by scholars. The use of stereotypical Native American music and dance as spectacle, however, had long been a part of the musical theater tradition. Michael Pisani's *Imagining Native America in Music* highlights the "standard tropes of musical Indianism," which include the use of pentatonic melodies, added sixths, and the "pastoral moresca rhythm," in works from Rudolph Friml to Irving Berlin.[79] In the case of Berlin's *Annie Get Your Gun*, he acknowledges that the representation is not meant to be authentic but still "dangerously reinforced many long-held misunderstandings about Native American peoples."[80] Yet as Andrea Most and Jeffrey Magee explore, the Indianist scenes in *Annie Get Your Gun* are part of a long tradition of "theatricalized Jewish-Indian interaction almost as old as Broadway."[81] For Annie, the song "I'm an Indian Too" and accompanying dance is a part of an adoption ceremony integral to her assimilation. Most explores the roleplaying of several other Jewish performers, noting that disguises of a stereotyped people help to erase their Jewish difference. Most states that "in adopting the appearance of a black or an Indian [these performers] hide

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[77]Oja, 20.

[78]Schwartz, 31.

[79]Michael Pisani, *Imagining Native America in Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 277 and 288.

[80] Ibid., 291.

[81]Jeffrey Magee, *Irving Berlin's American Musical Theater* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 159.

behind the sameness of racial typing."[82] The Indianist performance in *The Music Man* draws heavily on the stereotypes from musical theater history. However, the assimilationist element is missing – Eulalie Shinn and her Wan Ta Ye girls are all members of a strikingly homogenous community. The number highlights absurdity while still bringing to mind problematic aspects, such as the lack of an actual Native American presence and the appropriation of their supposed culture.

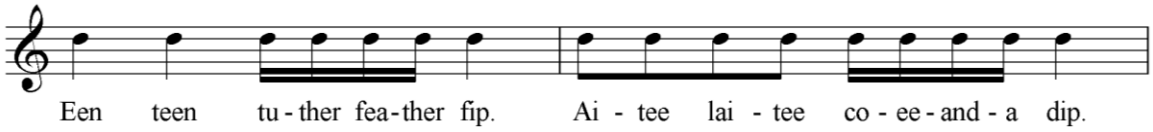
During the July 4th celebrations, the Mayor announces that the "Wan Ta Ye girls of the local wigwam of Heeawatha" will perform.[83] Like so many scenes from the film version, this one is drawn from the original stage production. Marian plays a highly stereotypical "Indian" motive on the piano that features parallel fifths and accents on the first and third beats as the girls and Eulalie come marching out into the gym in highly problematic costumes. Mrs. Shinn wears a long red dress with a large headdress and fake black braids and carries a decorated frame drum (Figure 2.25). The teenage girls wear brown, fringed tunics over their everyday dress that are tied with a green belt and accessorized with layered blue and white necklaces and headbands with feathers. Finally, the youngest girl Amaryllis sports a hunting look with a tan fringed dress, animal skin hat, hunting horn, and rifle (Figure 2.25). The group seems to be based on a type of program similar to the YMCA's Indian Princesses. Before, Tommy interrupts the proceedings, Eulalie exclaims "I will now count to twenty in the Indian tongue! Een teen tuther feather fip!" with the girls extending the pattern. They speak in a "Native American" rhythm as well (Example 2.5). This short scene exhibits a casual racism and appropriation of Native American culture by white, rural Americans, still quite common in the Midwest.

[82] Andrea Most, *Making Americans: Jews and the Broadway Musical* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 46.

[83] Willson, *Music Man*, 53.

Figure 2.25 Wan Ta Ye Girls.
Screen Capture.

Example 2.5. "Native American" Counting



Similar to in *The Music Man*, *Bye Bye Birdie* contains a remarkably white Midwestern community. As evidenced in "The Telephone Hour" and "A Lot of Livin' To Do," the teens of Sweet Apple, Ohio are an incredibly homogenous group. The very lack of racial or ethnic diversity makes a powerful and very problematic statement in the early days of the Civil Rights Movement. Though the film explores youth culture, it ignores the influence of African American music and popular culture so prevalent at the time. Furthermore, reading Conrad Birdie as Elvis Presley conjures associations brought on by the fact that Elvis in part transported what was considered a black aesthetic to larger audiences. Thus, the rejection of Birdie for the more whitewashed Hugo played by teen idol Bobby Rydell narratively reflects the whitewashing of Middle America inherent in this film.

The film version of *Bye Bye Birdie* also conspicuously transforms the Hispanic American Rose Alvarez to the more ethnically ambiguous Rose DeLeon. In the stage production, Rose's Spanish origins are frequently referred to by both Albert and Mae Peterson. In stalling Rose's wishes to get married, Albert claims "Rosie, if you are referring to anything of a more permanent

nature between you and me. I'm not ready for it. Besides, there are religious differences." Rosie acerbically replies, "Spanish is not a religion."[84] Similarly, Albert's mother disparagingly refers to Rose as Spanish or more colorfully a "Lady of Spain," "a certain party from South of the Border," and " a Mexicali Rose who came over for the fruit picking season."[85] From these epithets, it becomes clear that racism forms the core of Mrs. Peterson's objections to the marriage between her son and Rose. Rose even ironically embraces the identity thrust upon her by the Petersons (especially Mae). When fighting with Albert, she goes to the bar in town and insists that the bartender calls her Spanish Rose. She utters such phrases as "Ayano rancho grande. Ayano de vivia! Aiee!" Once Albert finally defies his mother, Mrs. Peterson and Rose have an exchange in which her racist tendencies truly come to the fore. Rosie then sings the song "Spanish Rose" in response. The lyrics reveal that she is from Allentown, Pennsylvania but ready to play up her Hispanic heritage in order to anger her mother-in-law.

All of these references disappear in the film version. Rose is never once referred to as "Spanish" by any of the characters. Her last name, DeLeon (pronounced Duh-LEE-ahn), does have Spanish origins; it is an Americanization of De León, meaning of the León province in northwestern Spain. Thus, the name has more explicit European ties than Alvarez. Therefore, while it is entirely possible that Rosie still has a Hispanic heritage, her character's ethnicity is more ambiguous. Furthermore, casting Janet Leigh – a native Californian with Danish heritage – as Rose lessens her Hispanic identity a great deal. Although her hair is dyed black, Rose displays no visual or aural markers of being Hispanic. In his autobiography, Charles Strouse laments the change, blaming the studios. He claims that

> the suits at Columbia Pictures made a point to adamantly tell us that there were no Hispanics in America (or South America, or Spain I suppose) who could sing and

[84]Stewart, 5.
[85]Stewart, 96 and 98.

> dance…casting went with Janet Leight in a dark wig and dark makeup. Blonde Janet Leigh, as Caucasian as you can get, could neither sing, dance, nor speak with a Latina accent.[86]

Therefore, the film whitewashes the issues of ethnicity inherent in the stage production. The bigotry that Mae Peterson and to a lesser extent even Albert demonstrate simply do not occur, and Rose does not have to contend with prejudice from her mother-in-law. Consequently, the social commentary is also lacking. In the stage production, Rose must deal with the assumption that she hails from anywhere from Spain to Cuba to Venezuela to Mexico and appropriates her Spanish persona in a mocking manner that highlights the bigotry. As ethnicity is a non-issue in the film, this commentary is absent.

(Anti-) Feminism and Sex

Interestingly, each of these films addresses the burgeoning trends towards feminism and/or sexual freedom. As befits their conservative viewpoints, the films advocate a highly traditional approach to these issues. In this way, they represent a sort of preemptive reaction to movements that become incredibly prominent later in the decade. Both *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* acknowledge the possibility of physical relationships between their main characters. However, the films make clear the fundamental virtue that underlies the lovers' relationship. Furthermore, both films promote faithful monogamous relationships while implying that the couples will adhere to traditional gender roles.

As discussed in the introduction, the film premiered during a transitional time in which both the leaps in women's rights and the inevitable backlash had yet to occur. The characterization of Marian Paroo provides a window into 1950s and early sixties possibilities and anxieties about women. In both the stage production and film, Marian is a single, working

[86]Charles Strouse, *Put On a Happy Face: A Broadway Memoir* (New York: Sterling, 2008), 95-6.

woman with an intellectual curiosity and passion for literature. A number of scholars discuss the implications of Marian the Librarian in American culture. Ronald Bukoff claims that "Marian not only sets the standard for subsequent depictions of musical librarians, she remains peerless."[87] Linda Malinowitz analyzes Marian in terms of the early twentieth century New Woman and a "cultural anxiety about literacy that focused particularly on those 'professionals' who were simultaneously entrusted to disseminate it and police it."[88] Malinowitz asserts that Marian is "subject to the onus of the single, intellectual, professional woman at a historical moment when these traits in women were being systematically demonized and linked to perversion."[89] Oja posits that these traits mark Marian as an outsider to the domesticated ladies of River City. Yet Marian's professional endeavors are traditionally feminine ones (i.e. librarian and piano teacher). Furthermore, she seemingly succeeds in taming Harold Hill (while being tamed by him), presumably poised to enter into traditional domesticity. Marian, therefore, can be seen as balancing between the modern feminist and the traditional view of domestic womanhood.

Essential to Marian's ability to inhabit both worlds is the ways in which she internalizes and resolves tensions between two typical dichotomies: virgin vs. whore and work vs. home. As Bukoff says, Marian is

> an interesting mélange of two conflicting worlds. Even though she physically embodies the stereotypical image of the spinster librarian with her prim and proper appearance and attitude, she is also a proto-feminist defending her beliefs and her books in the face of a town's conservative stance.[90]

[87]Ronald Bukoff, "'A Trip to the Library"; or, The Curse of 'Marian the Librarian': Images of Libraries and Librarians on the Musical Stage," *Studies in Popular Culture* 22: 1 (Oct. 1999), 34.

[88]Linda Malinowitz, "Textual Trouble in River City: Literacy, Rhetoric, and Consumerism in the *Music Man*," *College English* 62: 1 (Sep., 1999), 59.

[89]Ibid., 59.

[90]Bukoff, 35.

It is this conflict that the town mistrusts and demonizes Marian for in the guise of her supposed promiscuity. The married women of River City judge Marian due to her rumored sexual relationship with "old miser Madison," who willed all of the library books to Marian. This, of course, leads Harold to believe that she is a "sadder but wiser girl" and become genuinely attracted to the librarian. On the other hand, Marian at first seems to be prim and prudish in her behavior. Much to her mother's chagrin, Marian spurns the advances of Harold Hill as well as many other men in town. She uses her knowledge of sex from books as a sort of shield to guard herself from men. Yet Marian's love of all literature, dislike of censorship, and desire to broaden the horizons of the River City townsfolk provides a glimpse into her much more complicated nature.[91] She loves the Persian poetry and works of Honoré de Balzac that the other ladies denounce offhand as "dirty books." In "Marian the Librarian," Marian reveals herself to be susceptible to Hill's charms. Once she sees his positive impact on her troubled little brother, Marian becomes quite willing to overlook his flaws. Malinowitz observes that while Marian seems "softer," she "made an informed choice to suspend disbelief. She is working as a sort of double agent."[92] The film highlights Marian's skewed judgment and acceptance of Hill in several ways. In the original script, Hill describes the "think system" to Marian as a means of trying to convince her. In the film, she needs no such convincing. In fact, she enthusiastically praises his ingenuity. When Harold invites Marian to the footbridge, a reverse shot from her perspective shows a blurry shot of Harold, which mirrors Marian's mind hazy with her love. And as Knapp aptly observes, "in the end it is she who becomes the sexual aggressor in her relationship with

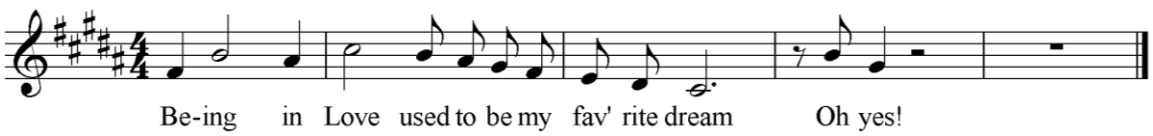
[91]Kimberly Canton refers to these aspects of Marian's character as highbrow and as part "the failure of language" as a trope. Yet part of Hill's success is to get the ladies of River City to actually read Marian's book suggestions – which they love. It is his own use of language, discussed in Malinowitz, that persuades the women. For further discussions of language and literacy in *The Music Man*, see Canton, 46 and Malinowitz 61-2.

[92]Malinowitz, 62.

Hill."[93] Knapp goes on to state that "the marriage trope in *The Music Man*, if there is one, is between sex (Hill) and music (Marian), with marriage, symbolic and deferential to the larger community, making the union of the two respectable."[94] Marian is neither a virginal figure nor a whore but a woman with complex emotions, sexual desire, and the ability to choose her path.

The song "Being in Love" reinforces these aspects of her character. Rather than focusing on a personal, simple vision of the perfect man (excepting the shared portion with "My White Knight"), "Being in Love" laments Marian's unrequited crushes. The tuneful song has a catchy repetitive melody and more active rhythmic pattern with a quicker tempo than its predecessor "My White Knight" (Example 2.6). This musical profile works together with more tongue-in-cheek lyrics as Marian lists her youthful loves of the trolley operator and the principal. She then becomes more serious as she lists the qualities of her perfect man in an almost recitative-like section. While the music returns to the beginning, the light-hearted quality of the lyrics has gone. She dramatically ends the songs, exclaiming that she will be dreaming "and hoping that someday there'll be: just once! Somebody being in love with me..." While the B section implies that Marian is simply choosy and unwilling to settle, the end of the song suggests that she is a lonely woman who just wants someone to love her back. These conflicting ideas sort themselves out in her relationship with Harold. While he does not fit into her vision of the ideal man, he is her equal in other ways and certainly loves her back.

Example 2.6. Opening Melody of "Being in Love."[95]



[93]Knapp, *National Identity*, 149.
[94]Ibid., 149.
[95]Transcribed by author.

Marian also embodies both the working woman and homemaker. In order to support her family, she runs the library and teaches piano lessons. Due to this Scott Miller notes that she is a "strong, smart, fiery young woman, age twenty, working two jobs (the library and piano lessons) as the sole provider for her family."[96] Marian executes her work very efficiently while also being able to help her mother around the house. The song "Marian the Librarian" as well as the convenient rhyming of her name with her occupation suggests that Marian's occupation is central to her identity. She is not just Marian; she is Marian the Librarian. Of course, the dual-focus narrative in Altman's figuration or the marriage trope in Knapp's advocates a very traditional reading of Marian's trajectory from spinster librarian lady to housewife. Yet before Harold gets caught by the angry mob, she explicitly tells him, "Oh, please don't be afraid that I expect too much more. One can't expect a *travelling* salesman to stay put. I know there have been many ports of call – and there will be many more." She is fully prepared for him to leave. Of course, Harold does not leave but allows himself to be caught due to his love for Marian. The ending certainly implies that he remains and the couple marries. However, that does not mean that Marian the Librarian, who owns all of the town's books, will quit her job. As Bukoff perceives, "there is no indication at the ending of the show that Marian Perdoo [sic] will end her career as the town librarian to become a home-bound Mrs. Hill. Marian is a modern woman. She gets her man and keeps her job."[97] The future is ambiguous as befits the time. Perhaps Marian the Librarian can "have it all," a job she enjoys and a husband she loves.

As mentioned in the section on conservatism, Conrad Birdie adds a dangerous, sexual element to *Bye Bye Birdie* that must be overcome. Yet the film also must overcome certain expectations of sexual behavior in order to establish the two primary couples as chaste. Filmed

[96]Miller, *Harold Hill*, 78.
[97]Bukoff, 35.

and released during the early sixties, before the sexual revolution gained a strong foothold that would rock the film industry, *Bye Bye Birdie* nevertheless seeks to combat nascent ideas of sexual freedom that characterized the beginning of the decade. Instead, the film strives to depict a more wholesome set of adult and teen relationships. Thus, the adaptation explicitly adds indications, primarily through dialogue, that both Rosie and Albert and Kim and Hugo remain virtuous lovers.

Mary Celeste Kearney's article on girls and the telephone in popular culture provides a context for the work that the film does in regards to women and sexuality. Kearney traces the development of female phone use for social reasons and depictions thereof. She further discusses increasing associations of teen girls and the phone. In media, this association showed parents allowing the annoyance of greater telephone use by their teenage daughters "in order to have greater knowledge about and control over their social behavior."[98] It also "encouraged such girls to locate themselves within the domestic sphere when not at school or work."[99] The focus on the telephone in *Bye Bye Birdie* implies both of these conservative goals. At the same time, Kearney argues that "'The Telephone Hour" engages in the fetishazation of the girls' attractive, nubile bodies through [the] passive, sexualized poses, the innocence of the calls and the positioning of the teens at their homes does much to establish their fundamental virtue."[100]

The film specifically adds several lines of dialogue that explicitly advocate for abstinence before marriage. Namely, Rosie and Albert apparently have not engaged in sexual relations despite their age and long engagement. At the same time, the film cracks several jokes that play

[98]Mary Celeste Kearney, "Birds on the Wire: Troping Teenage Girlhood through Telephony in mid-twentieth-century US Media Culture," *Cultural Studies* 19: 5 (September 2005), 580.

[99]Ibid., 588.

[100]Ibid., 592-3. It should also be noted that the boys are equally fetishized, appearing shirtless in a school shower.

on the possibility of their sexual relationship. In Rose's meeting with Ed Sullivan, she jests "any day now, Albert and I will have another mouth to feed." Shocked, Ed exclaims "Rosie, you're not even married!" – to which she quips, "His mother." The ambiguity of the exact nature of Albert and Rosie's physical relationship is necessary for the set-up of this joke, which ultimately makes a jab at mama's boy Albert and his domineering mother. Once the couple come to Sweet Apple and stay with the McAfee's, this ambiguity provides the basis for another humorous interaction:

> Harry McAfee: I know that show business crowd. Probably livin' in sin.
>
> Doris McAfee: Mr. McAfee!
>
> Harry: She's been engaged to Peterson for six years. Don't tell me th—
>
> Doris: *We* were engaged for five years.
>
> Harry: He's not as stupid as I was.

This exchange reveals sex before marriage as both unrespectable and desirable. However, it soon becomes quite clear that Rosie and Albert are not "livin' in sin." In fact, they are quaintly innocent and even somewhat bashful. Angry with Albert and annoyed with the advances of schoolteacher Mr. Paisley, Rosie confesses to Kim, "I know it sounds old-fashioned, but I'm not ashamed to admit it; I'm still a good girl." Her inexperience leads to the Shriner's ballet, in which Rosie dances suggestively and unwittingly puts herself in a comprising situation. Albert then rescues her and redeems himself in her eyes. The next morning, Albert checks on her, and the couple make plans to go to Niagara Falls to finally marry. Once again, the film highlights their purity.

> Albert: Rosie, you never saw me in pajamas before. Disappointed?
>
> Rosie: (Dreamily shakes head). You? (Turns in a short babydoll nightgown).

Albert: Let's take a plan to Niagara Falls. A jet.

The sight of Rosie in her lingerie clearly provokes long overdue passion in timid Albert. This passage also indicates that he views marriage as a necessary precursor to sex. These additions conscientiously insert an aura of sexual innocence and wholesome family values, even in the lives of the more mature engaged couple.

Furthermore, the film shifts emphasis to the younger couple Kim and Hugo. In the stage production, Kim is the secondary female lead. She sings two solo songs, "How Lovely to Be a Woman" and "One Boy" and participates in a number of others. With the addition of "Bye Bye Birdie" as well as the omission of five musical numbers that feature Rose, Kim becomes a much more significant character. Similarly, the non-singing role of Hugo becomes a much more musical one in order to accommodate teen pop singer Bobby Rydell (as discussed in further detail in the section "The Players"). Despite Kim's obvious desire to act like and be seen as an adult, she clearly represents a wholesome, innocent teenager. In the film, Kim relates her pinning to best friend Ursula, describing the teen dating ritual as making her feel "alive, fulfilled. I know what it means to be a woman." Of course, the original script indicates Kim's girlish virtuousness as well. The song "How Lovely to be a Woman" elaborates on Kim's balance between adulthood and childhood. As she sings the lyrics – a paean to stereotypical heteronormative 1950s womanhood – she changes into jeans, a sweatshirt, baseball cap, and fuzzy slippers (Figure 2.26a). In essence, she dons an ensemble that the script describes as "the antithesis of what she sings." Later in the film, she chastely kisses Hugo after placating him with the song "One Boy" (Figure 2.26b). Hugo seems stunned and enormously pleased, and Kim refers to her kiss as indicating the couple's "grand passion" (Figure 2.26c). The scene makes clear that this is the couple's first kiss. Moreover, when Rosie admits to Kim that she is a "good girl," Kim

reciprocates – stating a fact in confidence that has become supremely clear to the audience. The ways in which the film highlight Hugo and Kim's sweet and unflinchingly chaste relationship might be seen as a response to films featuring teenagers in the late fifties and early sixties that explore sex. For example, *Blue Denim* (1959) and *Splendor in the Grass* (1961) both delve into issues surrounding sexual desire and behavior in teens. Similarly, Anita in *West Side Story* represents a more overtly sexual woman. *Bye Bye Birdie*, on the other hand, deftly skirts around the issue through a few well-chosen lines of dialogue.

Figure 2.26. Kim and Hugo: *a*, "How Lovely to Be a Woman;" *b*, "One Boy" Kiss; *c*, Hugo's Reaction. Screen Captures.

Conclusion

As stage shows, *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie* remain standards in the musical theater repertory. Each received a treatment from ABC's *Wonderful World of Disney*; Jason Alexander and Vanessa Williams starred in the 1995 *Bye Bye Birdie* movie based on the stage show and Matthew Broderick and Kristin Chenoweth appeared in the 2003 television version of *The Music Man.* Furthermore, they both have enjoyed Broadway revivals in the past fifteen years. Craig Bierko and Rebecca Luker starred as Harold Hill and Marian Paroo respectively in

the 2000 revival of *The Music Man*. More recently, John Stamos played Albert Peterson in 2009's *Bye Bye Birdie*. They are also highly desirable choices for youth and high-school productions due to the proliferation of young characters, age-appropriate themes, and conservative, wholesome plotlines.

While the stage versions of these musicals have continued to thrive in various ways, each of the films pass the test of time to different extents. Then and now, neither film enjoyed the immediate or long-term success of such smash-hits as *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music*. Yet *The Music Man* seems to have greater continued relevance than *Bye Bye Birdie*. In many ways, both films might be considered "period pieces" and are most certainly products of their time. The brand of highly patriotic nostalgia that *The Music Man* trades in, however, remains appealing to American audiences. The film adaptation of *Bye Bye Birdie*, however, contains many dated elements (e.g. the Russian ballet and topical dialogue and humor that accompanies this addition). Furthermore, Robert Preston's performance, immortalized on film, continues to be the standard to which Harold Hill is held.[101] Significantly, Bierko's performance of Hill in the Broadway revival was reminiscent of Preston's charisma and charm. On the other hand, the leading actors in *Bye Bye Birdie* are most remembered for other roles. While *Birdie* was Dick Van Dyke's first film role, his appearance opposite Julie Andrews as Burt in *Mary Poppins* (1964) is much more well-known – due in large part to the latter film being a Disney production as well as Julie Andrews's stellar performance. Janet Leigh, of course, remains more well-known for her earlier films, especially Marion Crane in Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960). And Ann-Margret would go on to star opposite the actual Elvis Presley in *Viva Las Vegas* (1964).

[101]See John Staniunas, "Haunted characters: Harold and Marian: directing The Music Man," *Studies in Musical Theatre* 3: 1 (2009), 43-51.

As many scholars have argued, American musicals often have nation-building agendas or seek to represent the United State in some way. Whether or not they are set in the U.S., each of the musicals discussed in this dissertation engage in these types of activities in various ways. *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie*, however, represent very specific types of Americana. They are both consciously set in the Midwest and depict the lives of supposedly typical "everyday" Americans. The Midwestern setting places the people, events, and town in the heartland of America, glorifying the everyday lives of the many white Americans who live there. Thus, the films, even more than the stage productions, seek to provide a point of identification with a large swath of the movie-going audience. With their idealized small-town sets and emphasis of family and values, these films strive to be approachable within a regional yet highly national context.

CHAPTER 3 – The Last Hurrah: *The Sound of Music* (1965)

Introduction

Since the release of *Bye Bye Birdie,* America continued to experience social and political upheaval. By 1965 John F. Kennedy had been gone for two years, and his successor Lyndon B. Johnson remained president. Although his popularity would soon drop, Johnson had "won the grandest presidential victory since Franklin Delano Roosevelt's in 1936" in November of 1964.[1] While the Vietnam War raged on, widespread backlash against Johnson and what became known as the "credibility gap" would impact the president's popularity largely beginning in 1966.[2] Johnson was a notable supporter of civil rights, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 1965's Voting Rights Act were passed during his tenure as president. Despite persistent resistance from the South, America seemed to be making positive strides in race relations as a whole – at least institutionally. Furthermore, Betty Friedan's seminal book *The Feminine Mystique* had been published two years earlier and remained an important text in the ever-growing movement of second-wave feminism. As Friedan espoused, mid-sixties feminists were working towards workplace rights, acceptance of the still new birth control pill, and other such issues. Grant observes that films rarely overtly dealt with social and political issues, such as the war, in the mid-sixties. He also notes that "bubbling beneath the surface, however, even within the mainstream, one could easily detect the restlessness and disillusionment that would threaten to break apart the fabric of American society later in the decade and that certainly ended the ride of

[1] Rick Perlstein, *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America* (New York: Scribner, 2008), 6.

[2] Robert Dallek, *Lyndon B. Johnson: Portrait of a President* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 222.

Hollywood's family-style, Production Code-restricted cinema."[3] The ride, however, was not over yet.

Against this backdrop, *The Sound of Music* (1965) exploded. Along with *West Side Story*, *The Sound of Music* holds a special place in the pantheon of American movie musicals, representing the most widely popular mainstream film discussed in this dissertation. *The Sound of Music* not only provides a window into mid-1960s America but transcends its era while simultaneously offering the culmination of a long and fruitful film musical history. Coming on the heels of such successes as *My Fair Lady* (1964) and *Mary Poppins* (1964), *The Sound of Music* capitalizes on the family friendly musical with strong female protagonists and especially the still-growing fame of Julie Andrews. As in the previous two chapters, I explore this film adaptation in the context of its historical moment – looking at the socio-political events surrounding its production and premiere, its critical and popular reception, significant people involved with the film, and analyzing changes to the book, lyrics, and music as well as elements such as cinematography. My analysis of *The Sound of Music* considers how the film adaptation intersects with political and nationalist agendas, feminist ideologies, and a folk aesthetic. This final point regarding *The Sound of Music* and folk is a connection that many people do not make, yet the film draws on ideologies from the sixties folk movement.

Despite the persisting popularity of Broadway cast albums and film soundtracks, popular music continued to move farther away from Tin Pan Alley. As I discussed in the previous chapter, rock 'n' roll had become a permanent fixture in the American musical landscape. Albin Zak notes that the sophistication of Tin Pan Alley was replaced with a "simpler, more

[3]David Desser, "Movies and the Color Line," in *American Cinema of the 1960s: Themes and Variations*, ed. Barry Keith Grant (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 130.

straightforward kind of song."[4] Not only did rock 'n' roll fit this newer aesthetic but folk music as well. In the 1940s and fifties, groups such as The Weavers and The Kingston Trio gained popularity and built an "image of authenticity and connectedness to a mythical past and enduring tradition."[5] Folk music developed an "association with pastoralism, antiquarianism, the picturesque, and other nostalgic traditions."[6] Audience participation, informality, and a sense of non-professionalism pervaded the movement. Though, as Robert Cantwell aptly observes, "however painstakingly authentic, however technically accomplished, however rare and antiquated their aural sources, the folksingers of Washington Square [a center of the folk movement in New York] were still mostly interpreters of folksong, not indigenous tradition bearers."[7] Throughout the folk revival, a discourse of commercialism versus authenticity developed until a young Bob Dylan "openly challenged the distinction."[8] Nevertheless, the ideal of authenticity remained a standard within the folk discourse.

Folk and folk rock also became centers of protest and social commentary through artists such as Pete Seeger and Bob Dylan. Cantwell discusses the interconnection between the Cold War and the folk revival, claiming that "the cold-war mythology created a huge pacifist counterculture" that manifested in part in folk music.[9] Folk songs in the fifties and sixties often explicitly addressed political and social ills, especially war and civil rights. However, Cantwell asserts that "because it involves the movement of cultural materials across usually impassable social frontiers, from enclaved, marginal, usually poverty-stricken peoples toward the centers of

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[4]Albin Zak, *I Don't Sound Like Nobody: Remaking Music in 1950s America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 47.

[5]Zak, 63-4.

[6]Robert Cantwell, *When We Were Good: The Folk Revival* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 55.

[7]Ibid., 291.

[8]Reebee Garofalo, *Rockin' Out: Popular Music in the USA* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008), 176.

[9]Cantwell, 18.

cultural power, folk revivalism is inherently political."[10] Thus, the ideal of classlessness essential to the folk mentality contains an intrinsic socio-political message simply through association.

The year that *The Sound of Music* premiered was a big one on the folk scene. Dylan infamously played electric guitar at the Newport folk festival, much to the indignation of folk purists. Reebee Garofalo also asserts that 1965 was "*the* year for folk rock" as groups such as Simon and Garfunkel and The Byrds gained a large following.[11] It is into this complicated landscape of authenticity and professionalism, folk and rock, protest and entertainment in which *The Sound of Music* entered the arena. Although it seemingly has little to do with this particular popular music scene, the film's music in fact connects with many of the ideas if not always the sound of the American folk music of the time.

As had been the case during the 1950s, Hollywood continued to suffer from falling audience attendance through the middle of the 1960s. Krämer asserts that "after a temporary slight recovery in the mid-1950s, attendance levels dropped further until, from 1966, onwards, they stabilized."[12] As I will discuss shortly, one significant means of compensating for the drop in attendance involved the studio focusing their efforts on fewer but more expensive productions designed to attract people to the cinema. These high-budget films tended to be marketed as prestige products in order to differentiate them from typical fare offered both on film and television. Location shooting in Europe became an increasingly popular way to defray the ever-growing production costs. Despite these and other tactics, Hollywood was in a crisis that would come to a head in the latter half of the decade, and Fox's adaptation of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound of Music* would play a key role in the changing industry.

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[10]Ibid., 51.

[11]Garofalo, 190.

[12]Peter Krämer, *The New Hollywood: From Bonnie and Clyde to Star Wars* (London: Wallflower, 2005), 20.

The Sound of Music looms large in film literature as the epitome of the mid-1960s roadshow musical. "Roadshowing" a film refers to a particular means of exhibition – namely, studios released certain films to be "presented in only a few showcase theatres, where they had very long runs (often for years) at premium prices, usually with separate performances (unlike the usual practice of running films continuously across the day)."[13] These films were further given the appearance of an "event" through advance bookings and the selling of souvenir programs. The films themselves were often extremely lengthy, highly expensive, and featured an Overture and Intermission with accompanying music. This last element, in particular, serves to simulate the live theater-going experience. Studios also generally intended roadshow musicals to be blockbusters, which Sheldon Hall and Steven Neale define as "a film designed to make a big impact on the box office, one capable of generating exceptionally large revenues partly by virtue of it exceptional production values."[14] Of course, this format had been around for decades before *The Sound of Music* as a means for attracting dwindling audiences back to the cinema. Krämer defines the years 1949-66 as the roadshow era.[15] During this over sixteen-year time period, a number of genres received roadshow treatment, including the historical and biblical epic, the western, the historical drama, and the war film as well as the musical. Some examples of roadshow successes and failures include *The Ten Commandments* (1956), *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1956), *South Pacific* (1958), *Ben-Hur* (1959), and *Cleopatra* (1963). For a time, the success of fifties roadshow films were thought to herald "the possibility of an entirely revised

[13]Krämer, 21.

[14]Sheldon Hall and Steve Neale, *Epics, Spectacles, and Blockbusters: A Hollywood History* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010), 139.

[15]This time period does not imply that the roadshow type format was first used in 1949 but that this is the period in which it thrived. In fact, Hall and Neale identify Italian epics from the 1910s, such as *Quo Vadis* (1913), as "the first films to be roadshown in the United States on national rather than a regional, states rights basis," 29. Studios continued to roadshow large pictures throughout the '20s and '30s, including the sweeping *Gone With the Wind* (1939).

exhibition structure."[16] The heyday of the prestige production, however, did not change the fabric of cinematic experience and save the film industry. In fact, studios produced flops as well as the wild successes that sparked this thinking, and many of the successes came from film musicals.

With an extended history of adaptation from the Broadway stage, the musical proved to be a logical choice for the roadshow format. Hall and Neale note that MGM's Arthur Freed had long "been advocating the presentation of film musicals on Broadway in the manner of stage shows."[17] The authors go on to note that "Broadway shows promised prestige as well as presold songs and titles. Adaptations of them became the dominant mode of musical production in the latter part of the 1950s and throughout the 1960s."[18] Indeed, the 1960s saw an influx of highly successful roadshow musicals, including *West Side Story* (1961) and *My Fair Lady* (1964). With a gross of seventy-two million dollars, *My Fair Lady* ushered in a trend of high-budget, polished film adaptations of Broadway musicals. As Krämer observes, *My Fair Lady* and other films such as *Mary Poppins* featured "female protagonists as well as the mostly past and foreign settings so dominant in mid-1960s superhits."[19] Yet the film that conformed to this formula while taking the format to a whole new level is, of course, *The Sound of Music*. This film has gone down in history as, paradoxically, the most continually beloved film musical of all time and the film that sounded the death knell for the film musical.

The Show

The Sound of Music marks Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II's final collaboration. The team has been popularly credited with revolutionizing American musical

[16]Ibid., 159.
[17]Hall and Neale, 161.
[18]Ibid., 183.
[19]Krämer, 12.

theater, and their first show *Oklahoma!* is often cited as a landmark (1943). Both *Oklahoma!* and *Carousel* included more serious subject matter that addressed social issues such as domestic violence. Rodgers and Hammerstein also brought issues of racism, assimilation, and tolerance to the forefront in their so-called Asian musicals: *South Pacific* (1948), *The King and I* (1951), and *Flower Drum Song* (1958). By the time Rodgers and Hammerstein worked on *The Sound of Music,* they were musical theater giants. Unlike their previous collaborations, *The Sound of Music*'s book was not written by Hammerstein. Instead writing team Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse penned the book, and Hammerstein only wrote the lyrics. The team also had plenty of experience in having their stage shows adapted to film. Five of their stage musicals (*Oklahoma!, Carousel, South Pacific, The King and I,* and *Flower Drum Song*) received Hollywood treatment. The film version of *The Sound of Music* might be seen as the culmination of a highly successful and acclaimed career.

The creation of the stage version of *The Sound of Music* (1959) centered very much around the involvement of Mary Martin and her husband and manager Richard Halliday. While directing Mary Martin in a California-based production of *Annie Get Your Gun*, director Vincent Donehue saw the German film *Die Trapp-Familie* (1956). The film was based on the memoirs of Maria von Trapp. In 1949, Maria Kutschera von Trapp wrote the bestseller *The Story of the Trapp Family Singers*, which inspired both hugely successful German films *Die Trapp Familie* (1956) and *Die Trapp Familie in Amerika* (1958). Thinking the story, would be a perfect vehicle for Martin, Donahue approached her. Loving the idea, Martin and Halliday contacted the real life Maria von Trapp.[20] After some time, they were able to acquire the rights from the German film

[20]See both Maria von Trapp and Mary Martin's autobiographies for more detail on this and other encounters. Maria von Trapp, *Maria* (Carol Stream, Illinois: Creation House, 1972), 162-66. Mary Martin, *My Heart Belongs* (New York: Morrow, 1976), 239-53.

company to which Baroness von Trapp had sold her story. Martin and Halliday asked Lindsay and Crouse to write the book, which would be based on the German film and Maria von Trapp's memoirs. Martin, who had a relationship with Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, asked the team to write a couple of songs to supplement Austrian and German classics.[21] Rodgers, however, balked, saying "no way am I competing with Mozart and Brahms and Austrian folksongs. Oscar and I would like to write the entire score."[22] Thus, the musical became Rodgers and Hammerstein's final collaboration with one another as Hammerstein was diagnosed with cancer during its creation and died August 23, 1960. As this outline of the genesis suggests, the stage production was created as a star vehicle for Broadway darling Mary Martin.

The writing team of Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse were Broadway veterans as well, working both in musical theater and straight plays. They enjoyed a lengthy collaboration, writing together for roughly thirty years. The two revised the book of *Anything Goes* (1934) and wrote the book for the Cole Porter musical *Red, Hot and Blue* (1936). The team also collaborated with Irving Berlin on such musicals as *Call Me Madam* (1956) and the later *Mr. President* (1962). While Mark Grant states that Lindsay and Crouse wrote "divertissement books for musicals, requiring less excogitation," there is more to their varied output. Jeffrey Magee discusses the team's shows with Berlin, which "feature a likeable, well-meaning protagonist thrust into the center of national and international politics and into situations that test the durability of personal relationships."[23] Magee discusses how both shows reference and engage with current events and politics, including the Cold War. This aspect of their work resonates with their treatment of politics and World War II in *The Sound of Music*. With a long and successful

[21]Martin had previously starred as Nellie Forbush in the team's *South Pacific* (1949).
[22]Qtd. in Max Wilk, *The Making of The Sound of Music* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 11.
[23]Jeffrey Magee, *Irving Berlin's American Musical Theater* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 265.

career by the late fifties, the writers would be the perfect choice to write a play based on the life of Maria von Trapp.

The Broadway production opened at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre on November 16, 1959 and ran for 1,443 performances. Of course, Mary Martin starred as Maria Rainer, and her captain was played by Theodore Bikel. The musical won four Tony Awards, including Best Musical (in a tie with *Fiorello!*) and Best Actress in a Musical for Martin. Many sources detail the genesis and production history of the famed musical. In particular, see Max Wilk's *The Making of the Sound of Music* for a look at the history of the musical from its inception to the film and beyond. From this, one can get a sense of the people involved, including the real-life Maria von Trapp, and the process as it came to fruition. And of course, Richard Rodgers's own autobiography discusses the musical from his perspective.[24]

The Sound of Music fits into the large body of scholarship on Rodgers and Hammerstein. As arguably the most famous, most significant, and most influential team in American musical theater, this body is vast and varied. As discussed in the introduction to this dissertation, integration forms an important part of the discourse surrounding Rodgers and Hammerstein.[25] The duo loom large in musical theater scholarship, causing many to define eras in relation to their works. For instance, Geoffrey Block structures *Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway*

[24]Richard Rodgers, *Musical Stages: An Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1975), 299-302.

[25]Scholars such as Mark Grant and Denny Martin Flinn explicitly place Rodgers and Hammerstein at the apex of the American musical. See Mark Grant, *The Rise and Fall of the Broadway Musical* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004) and Denny Martin Flinn, *Musical! A Grand Tour: The Rise, Glory, and Fall of an American Institution* (New York: Schirmer, 1997). The notion of integration and Rodgers and Hammerstein's relationship with this concept underlie the view of their musicals, particularly *Oklahoma!* and *Carousel*, as being revolutionary. See Geoffrey Block, "Integration," in *The Oxford Handbook of the American Musical*, ed. Knapp et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 97-110 for a concise discussion of integration. As Block points out, integration and the privileging of the Rodgers and Hammerstein-style musical has also been problematized. See Bruce Kirle, *Unfinished Show Business: Broadway Musicals as Works-in-Process* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005) and Scott McMillin *The Musical as Drama* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006) for alternate views.

Musical from Show Boat *to Sondheim and Lloyd Webber* using the designations "Before Rodgers and Hammerstein" and "After *Oklahoma!*."[26] *The Sound of Music*, however, does not have the same status as works such as *Oklahoma!* (1943) or *Carousel* (1945).[27] Larry Stempel discusses the dismay of both critics and scholars, citing that "it seemed to many to indulge in the 'clichés of operetta,' and it seemed its authors had 'succumbed to a sort of joint amnesia and forgotten everything that Broadway learned, partly under their tutelage, in the forties and fifties.'"[28] Block mentions the musical only in passing in his analytical work on Richard Rodgers. Similarly, Scott Miller leaves out the musical in his history, stating explicitly "don't look for *Brigadoon* or *The Sound of Music* here – those are perfectly nice shows, but they played no part in the evolution of the musical theatre."[29] In part, this disdain stems from the fact that Hammerstein did not write the libretto as was his wont, and many think the book by Lindsay and Crouse is overly sentimental. Yet John Bush Jones asserts that "in terms of its thematic core, *The Sound of Music* is very much a Rodgers and Hammerstein musical."[30] Several scholars, such as Raymond Knapp and Stacy Wolf, do write on both the stage and film versions of *The Sound of Music*. This previous work will ground my discussion of the film throughout the rest of the chapter.

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[26]Geoffrey Block, *Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from* Show Boat *to Sondheim and Lloyd Webber*, 2nd edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[27]Tim Carter's *Oklahoma!: The Making of an American Musical* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007) is indicative of this.

[28]Larry Stempel, *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 347. He is quoting here from reviews of the show, including Brooks Atkinson.

[29]Scott Miller, *Strike Up the Band: A New History of the Musical Theatre* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2007), 7.

[30]John Bush Jones, *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre* (Lebanon, New Hampshire: Brandeis University Press, 2003), 159.

The Film

In scholarship, the film version of *The Sound of Music* is practically synonymous with the roadshow musical. With its three-hour run time and typical use of an Overture, Intermission with Entr'acte, and Exit music, the film followed in the footsteps of dozens of roadshows before it. As Hall and Neale have shown, roadshows often had an epic dimension both in visual and narrative scale as well as blockbuster status. Indeed, as Krämer observes, *The Sound of Music* "has an epic dimension, setting its central story against the rise of fascism."[31] Thus, the adaptation might be considered an epic musical, aligning itself with a rich set of cinematic associations particularly from the previous decade. In many ways, *The Sound of Music* might be seen as the result of the industry's nearly fifteen-year search for a formula that would bring in ever-dwindling audiences. And it seemed to have worked. Hall and Neale assert that "more than any other film, the benchmark for blockbusters in the second half of the decade was set by Fox's *The Sound of Music*."[32] The film ran for four-and-a-half years in its original release and eventually grossed $160 million. With a budget of only $8.2 million, *The Sound of Music* made a staggering amount of money for Fox. This "spectacular success" could not have come at a better time, helping to save the studio from bankruptcy.[33] The hugely expensive *Cleopatra* (1963), starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, had put an enormous strain on the studio, costing an estimated $44 million while only grossing $57,750,000. Studio head Darryl F. Zanuck hoped that the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical would help to recoup losses from the historical epic, and he was not disappointed.

[31]Krämer, 28.
[32]Hall and Neale, 184.
[33]Mark Wheeler, *Hollywood Politics and Society* (London: BFI Publishing, 2006), 31.

Of course, the popularity of the soundtrack had much to do with the success of the film. As Rodgers and Hammerstein's final musical together, the stage version of *The Sound of Music* enjoys a special place in the musical team's oeuvre. The original cast album, featuring Mary Martin and Theodore Bikel, spent sixteen weeks as #1 on Billboard's best-selling charts in 1960, ensuring that the score was already familiar to many Americans by the time of the film's release. In fact, the cast album spent 276 weeks on the charts as a whole, continuing into the release of the film soundtrack.

The song "My Favorite Things" took on a life of its own. In 1961, John Coltrane recorded a nearly fifteen minute version of the song on his album *My Favorite Things.* Since Coltrane's adoption of the tune, it has since become a jazz standard. The song has also – somewhat bizarrely – become a popular Christmas tune, presumably due to the mention of "snowflakes" and "white paper packages tied up with strings." "My Favorite Things" has appeared on Christmas albums since 1964, including those of Barbra Streisand, Johnny Mathis, The Carpenters, Dionne Warwick, and Rod Stewart. By 1965, the film soundtrack, released by RCA Victor, did very well. The album spent five weeks at #1 on Billboard's charts and charted for 233 weeks altogether. It also did enormously well internationally, especially in Britain where it spent a total of seventy weeks at #1.

It can be difficult to pin down specifics regarding the make-up of an audience, and the enormous success of *The Sound of Music* suggests a wide appeal. Yet the film is constantly referred to as family entertainment. The presence of seven children as well as themes of family unity and values certainly indicate that the film would attract a family audience. Hall and Neale assert that *The Sound of Music*, along with *Mary Poppins* and *My Fair Lady*, "suggested that the genre [of the musical] might be the ideal form to attract back to cinemas the 'lost audience' of

adults with families."[34] The numbers do suggest a fair amount of repeat business, especially in cities where tickets sales extended above the surrounding population.[35] Yet both Peter Krämer and Brett Farmer go beyond the somewhat safer assumption of a family audience to propose that *The Sound of Music* was especially popular with women. Both authors emphasize the importance of female protagonists and female stars as embodied by Julie Andrews. Farmer extrapolates his conclusions in part from contemporary accounts that mention the profusion of women attending showings of the film.[36] In the context of the changing industry in which films begin to target a young adult (18-25) male audience and considering many aspects of the film itself, it does indeed seem reasonable to regard the film as particularly connecting with a family and perhaps predominately female audience.

Despite its enormous popular success, the critical reaction to *The Sound of Music* was much less enthusiastic.[37] Several critics denounced the film as being too "saccharine" – a word used repeatedly to describe the show in general. Pauline Kael wrote a particularly harsh diatribe, stating,

> Whom could this operetta offend? Only those of us who, despite the fact that we may respond, loathe being manipulated in this way and are aware of how cheap and ready-made are the responses we are made to feel. We may become even more aware of the way we have been turned into emotional and aesthetic imbeciles when we hear ourselves humming the sickly, goody-goody songs.[38]

[34]Hall and Neale, 184.

[35]See Hall and Neale, Brett Farmer, "The Singing Sixties: Rethinking the Julie Andrews Roadshow Musical," in *The Sound of Musicals*, ed. Steven Cohan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 114-27 and Julia Hirsch, *The Sound of Music: The Making of America's Favorite Movie* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1993) for more discussion of the specific sales figures.

[36]See Farmer, 119.

[37]The stage production suffered a similar fate, receiving negative notices despite being quite popular with audiences. See my above discussion and Max Wilk for some of the reviews of the stage production.

[38]Qtd. in Hirsch, 175.

New York Times's Bosley Crowther makes unflattering comparisons to operetta, claiming that Wise "staged [the film] in a cosy-cum-corny fashion that even theater people know is old hat."[39] Similarly, Terry Clifford of the *Chicago Tribune* asserts that *The Sound of Music* "is not recommended fare for those on a schmaltz-free diet."[40] According to these reviewers, the film failed to circumvent the sweetness of the original stage production. Yet both Crowther and Clifford find reason for praise. Each acknowledges the critiques that might be leveled at the abundance of location shooting while admitting the stunning effectiveness of the Salzburg locations. Crowther and Clifford also compliment Julie Andrews's powerhouse performance as Maria and compare it to her Award-winning performance as Mary Poppins. Crowther declares that Andrews "makes the most apparent and fetching innovation in the film…with her air of radiant vigor…and her ability to make her dialogue as vivid and appealing as she makes her songs."[41] The West Coast reception of the film was much more positive. *Los Angeles Times* critic Phillip Scheuer has nice things to say not only about Andrews but the rest of the cast and avows that "while I still regard the composers' *South Pacific* as superior musically…this one surpasses it artistically."[42] Although it received a handful of positive comments or even full reviews, this film has gone down in history as one of the truly critic-proof musicals.

As discussed in an above section, *The Sound of Music* has a rather more tenuous place in both musical theater and film scholarship than Rodgers and Hammerstein's other efforts. Of course, popular literature, in the form of companion literature and biographies, is in no short supply for the film. In musical theater surveys and histories, authors tend to discuss the team's earlier efforts, particularly *Oklahoma!* or *Carousel*, on the grounds that they are more indicative

[39]Bosley Crowther, "*The Sound of Music* Opens at Rivoli," *New York Times*, March 3, 1965.
[40]Terry Clifford, "Musical Film a Mixture of Austria and Andrews," *Chicago Tribune*, March 18, 1965.
[41]Crowther, "*Sound of Music*."
[42]Philip K. Scheuer, "*Sound of Music* Without the Taste of Saccharine," *Los Angeles Times*, March 7, 1965.

of the Rodgers and Hammerstein innovation and the principle of integration.[43] Their so-called Asian musicals, especially *South Pacific*, have also attained a fair amount of scholarly attention due to the social issues that they address.[44] However, the extraordinary popularity of *The Sound of Music* makes it difficult to ignore. Film scholarship, especially that which deals with epics or the 1960s particularly, must acknowledge the enormous impact that the film had on the industry. As Neale and Hall have stated, *The Sound of Music* was "the benchmark for blockbusters."[45] And in the past ten years, more scholarly work has been done on the film. Raymond Knapp and Stacy Wolf have both devoted analyses to various aspects of *The Sound of Music*, and Caryl Flinn is writing a monograph on the film as this chapter is being written.[46] And as will become apparent in the next section, discussion of Julie Andrews populates scholarly work on musicals and film. There remains, however, much to be said about this highly successful film and its relationship to the stage version and its historical milieu.

The Players

Much of the same filmmaking team from *West Side Story*, a well-known success, reassembled for the adaptation of *The Sound of Music*. Robert Wise directed the film, and Ernest Lehman wrote the screenplay. In *The Making of The Sound of Music*, Max Wilk details how the two came onto the project.[47] While Lehman was one of the first people to work on the film

[43]See Joseph Swain, *The Broadway Musical: A Critical and Musical Survey* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2002) Geoffrey Block, *Enchanted Evenings* as examples.

[44]See Bruce McConachie, "The 'Oriental' Musicals of Rodgers and Hammerstein and the U.S. War in Southeast Asia" *Theatre Journal* 46: 3 (Oct. 1994), 385-98 and Jim Lovensheimer, *South Pacific: Paradise Revised* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[45]Hall and Neale, 184.

[46]Raymond Knapp includes *The Sound of Music* as part of his chapter on dealing with WWII in musical theater, *The American Musical and the Formation of National Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 228-39. *The Sound of Music* figures prominently throughout Stacy Wolf's *A Problem Like Maria: Gender and Sexuality in the American Musical* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002) as she discusses Maria as a character and lesbian identification as well as in relation to both Mary Martin and Julie Andrews.

[47]See Wilk for full discussion.

adaptation, Wise replaced William Wyler when the film that he had been working on, *The Sand Pebbles* (1966), became delayed. Wise had won the Academy Award for Best Director (with Jerome Robbins) for his work on *West Side Story*, and therefore would be an excellent choice for bringing another successful musical to the screen. Although an acclaimed director, Wise only completed two films in between *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music*: *Two for the Seesaw* (1962) and *The Haunting* (1963). As mentioned above, the director spent a great deal of time in preparation for the epic *The Sand Pebbles*, which would finally enter production and be released the year after the successful musical. A skilled screenwriter and adapter, Lehman had also done little since *West Side Story*, writing only the spy film *The Prize* (1963) starring Paul Newman. As I will explore in subsequent sections, these two collaborators had much to do with the ways in which the film adapted the stage production.

The most recognizable person associated with *The Sound of Music* is the incomparable Julie Andrews; the actress is considered by many as virtually inseparable from the film. At the time of the film's making, Andrews was known mostly for her stage roles and was untested at the box office. Julie Andrews began her career in England as a child, able to sing with a mature, clear tone and produce high notes. In 1954, she made her Broadway debut as Polly Browne in *The Boy Friend*. But it was Lerner and Loewe that would make her a star. She originated the role of Eliza Doolittle in the highly successful *My Fair Lady* (1956) on stage. In a documentary, Andrews later tells a story about her audition for Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Pipe Dream*. She admits that Rodgers generously advised her to take the Lerner and Loewe opportunity if offered but to let them know if she was free so that they could use her.[48] She also originated the role in the Broadway production of *Camelot* (1960). These two musicals and their accompanying cast

[48]Julie Andrews, et al., "My Favorite Things: Julie Andrews Remembers," *The Sound of Music*. DVD. Directed by Robert Wise (Beverly Hills, CA: Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment, 1965).

albums made the young Julie Andrews a Broadway star. Although she chose *My Fair Lady* over *Pipe Dream*, Andrews had another opportunity to sing a Rodgers and Hammerstein musical before filming *The Sound of Music*. The team wrote the television musical *Cinderella* (1957) for Andrews. 107 million viewers tuned in to the broadcast of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella*, turning the Broadway darling into a household name.

However, Andrews had yet to be tested on the big screen. Producers infamously rejected Andrews to play Eliza Doolittle in the Warner Brothers film version of *My Fair Lady* (1964) in favor of Hollywood star Audrey Hepburn – despite the fact that Hepburn was not a strong singer and was eventually dubbed by Marni Nixon. While Andrews had recently filmed Disney's *Mary Poppins*, the film was not released at the time of casting. As the story goes, Robert Wise and associates actually went to view the dailies before settling on Julie Andrews as Maria. She was also filming the non-musical *The Americanization of Emily*. Both films would come out in 1964. *Mary Poppins* did well at the box office, grossing $52,043,304 that year, and Andrews won the Academy Award for her performance as the magical nanny. And it was this film, along with *The Sound of Music*, that would shape Andrews's star persona – a persona that holds so much sway it continues to the present, despite a long and varied career.

In the popular and scholarly discourse surrounding Andrews, many of the same ideas or keywords consistently appear: sweet, elegant, wholesome, and strong. These descriptors intersect with Andrews's nanny/governess roles, conflating her star image with her most famous characters. In *A Problem Like Maria*, Stacy Wolf gives an extended analysis of Andrews's persona and performances, both in a mainstream context and reevaluating them to explore meaning from a queer perspective. Wolf notes that

> with her perfect posture and perfect diction, her bright blue eyes and well-defined features, and her British accent just strong enough to suggest royalty to an American

> audience, Andrews exuded a kind of not-yet-a-star quality even after she was a huge star.[49]

Andrews charmed audiences, both onscreen and off, with her perceived elegance, graciousness, and sweet humility. Wolf also discusses how the actress and her voice are inextricably linked. Peter Kemp proposes that Andrews has a "perfectly pitched, superbly articulated vocal instrument ideal for the lyric-dependent songs of stage and movie musicals."[50] Known for vocal clarity and a wide range, Andrews's voice quickly became iconic. Wolf posits that "descriptions of Andrews's voice produce associations with her personality; because her voice sounds sweet, she seems to be good, innocent, and properly feminine."[51] These associations also dovetail with the persona developed from Andrews's nanny roles. Thus, her voice reinforces the image constructed through *Mary Poppins* and *The Sound of Music*.

Before *The Sound of Music*, Canadian actor Christopher Plummer was most known for his classical acting abilities. His theatrical roles include Hamlet, Henry V, Macbeth, and Cyrano de Bergerac, performing in the Stratford Shakespeare Festival and with the Royal Shakespeare Company. In 1959, he was nominated for Best Actor in a Play at the Tony Awards for his work in the Pulitzer Prize winning *J.B.* (1958). He had also appeared in numerous television roles and a handful of films. With multiple Shakespearean roles and Broadway credits, the thirty-five year old actor brought a certain gravitas to the film version of *The Sound of Music.* He has also given the film a hard time rather publicly, famously calling it "The Sound of Mucus" and other such quips.[52] Yet the immediate and long-lasting success of the film has done much to define his persona if not shape his career.

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[49]Wolf, *Problem Like Maria*, 139.

[50]Peter Kemp, "How Do You Solve a 'Problem' Like Maria von Poppins?," in *Musicals: Hollywood and Beyond*, ed. Bill Marshall and Robynn Stilwell (Exeter, England: Intellect, 2000), 60.

[51]Wolf, *Problem Like Maria*, 140.

[52]Wilk, 80.

Fidelity

The filmmakers' approach in *The Sound of Music* offers a complicated look at fidelity and creativity. Not surprisingly, the members of the team that had worked on *West Side Story* (Robert Wise, Ernest Lehman, and Saul Chaplin) took a similar attitude towards *The Sound of Music*. Julia Hirsch claims that Lehman "had a reputation for being unusually faithful to original material."[53] Yet in *The Sound of Music*, as with *West Side Story*, he did a significant amount of rearranging, cutting, and adding to the book and score as well as taking full advantage of the cinematic medium. Critic Bosley Crowther declares that the film "comes close to being a careful duplication of the show as it was done onstage."[54] Similarly, Rick Altman cites this film among others exemplifying the fact that a "lack of independence from the stage production was the rule" in the fifties and sixties.[55] It is certainly true that veneration and respect for the original stage production had been highly valued since Rodgers and Hammerstein. Yet *The Sound of Music* balances fidelity with creativity in a way that the above comments do not acknowledge.

The extensive use of Salzburg locations, particularly in the musical numbers, takes full advantage of the change in medium and automatically begins to make the film distinct from the stage production. Wise and Lehman make stunning use of these outdoor locations.[56] In fact, the location shooting that proved to be a bit more controversial in *West Side Story* was used to great effect in *The Sound of Music*. Perhaps the beautiful European town with old buildings and stunning mountain scenery seems to invite song more than the streets of contemporary New York City (Figure 3.1). Documentaries, popular literature, reviews, and scholarship all praise the

[53]Hirsch, 25.
[54]Crowther, "*Sound of Music*," 34.
[55]Rick Altman, *The American Film Musical* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 197.
[56]See Julia Hirsch for a detailed discussion for the exact locations used for the film and how the scenes were shot.

wonderful location shooting as one of the most spectacular aspects of the film. Stacy Wolf aptly observes that due to Wise's camerawork the musical numbers seldom look "stagey."[57] Indeed, the term "travelogue" continuously comes up in relation to the numbers "I Have Confidence" and "Do-Re-Mi." The filmmakers employ geographic movement in these sequences to correspond to emotional and/or temporal movement: Maria convinces herself to be confident in her new situation; Maria and the von Trapp children bond as the summer progresses (Figure 3.2 and 3.3). In "Do-Re-Mi," Maria and her charges play in the Austrian hills, ride bikes through town, visit a market, and take a carriage ride (Figure 3.3). These changes in location throughout the musical number gives it a sense of movement quite different from the more static version onstage.

Figure 3.1. Examples of Locations from Opening. Screen Captures.

[57]Wolf, *Problem Like Maria*, 220.

Figure 3.2. "I Have Confidence" Various Location Shots. Screen Captures.

Figure 3.3. "Do-Re-Mi" Various Location Shots. Screen Captures.

Lehman and music supervisor Irwin Kostal kept the original score relatively intact while making some key changes that emphasize Maria's character. Only three songs – "How Can Love Survive?," "No Way to Stop It," and "Ordinary Couple" – are cut entirely (see Table 3.1 and Appendix B). Hirsch claims of the first two that Lehman both "thought these two songs were weak compared to the other songs [and] wanted to scale down the roles of the secondary characters to streamline the story."[58] The absence of these songs significantly reduces the roles of Elsa Schraeder and Max Detweiler as well as the overt socio-political issues as I will tease out in later sections. In a nutshell, as Max Wilk states, the alterations to the characters of Max and Elsa did not mesh with the "somewhat cynical attitudes toward life, and the joy of being surrounded by the upper class, and the advantages of the status quo" that the songs espoused.[59]

Table 3.1. Cut Numbers.

How Can Love Survive? – Act I, Scene 8 (Max Detweiler and Elsa Schraeder)
No Way to Stop It – Act II, Scene 1 (Max, Elsa, and Captain Georg von Trapp)
Ordinary Couple – Act II, Scene 1 (Maria Rainer and Captain von Trapp)

Of "Ordinary Couple," Rodgers seemed quite willing to replace it with the newly composed "Something Good," claiming that it would have been replaced in production if Hammerstein had been in better health (Table 3.1 and Appendix B). The composer apparently exclaimed "she's a nun who left the convent and he was an honored naval captain. They were far from ordinary!"[60] The new contribution, "Something Good," offered instead a romantic tribute to redemption that Raymond Knapp skillfully connects to America's attitude towards Salzburg after the war. He claims that the song "reaffirms the redemptive value of an authenticating past" and thus is part of the ideological work of the film, showing "good Europeans" and a "Europe in

[58]Hirsch, 24.
[59]Wilk, 72.
[60]Qtd. in Hirsch, 36.

need of rescue" by Americans.[61] Rodgers, in fact, worked on two new songs for the film: "Something Good" and "I Have Confidence." However, Wilk and Hirsch both point out producer and musician Saul Chaplin's significant role in the composition of the latter song.[62] Rodgers wrote several versions of the song but Chaplin "felt it needed an inner progression, one in which the audience could see how Maria would go from being unsure to growing in self-reliance."[63] Eventually, Chaplin took Rodgers's melody and added other sections, including the verse from "The Sound of Music" that the film cut. Therefore, the final version of "I Have Confidence" is an arrangement of Rodger's music by Chaplin.

Although much of the score remained in the film, Lehman readjusted, added, and deleted scenes in order to alter characterizations and better fit the trajectory that he was trying to achieve. Saul Chaplin asserted that "Ernie had retained elements that had made the show such an enormous hit, but by changes and additions, he improved it enormously."[64] This attitude is shared by Robert Wise, Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer, and other members of the cast and crew and freely expressed in interviews conducted for the DVD special features. As he had with *West Side Story*, Lehman rearranged the order of several songs to suit his purposes (See Table 3.2 and Appendix B). The changes in song order serve to highlight Maria's primacy in the film, her relationship with the children, and her positive effect on the Captain.

[61]Knapp, *National Identity*, 234.
[62]See Wilk, 72-3 and Hirsch, 37 for description of Chaplin's rewriting of the song.
[63]Wilk, 80.
[64]Qtd. in Wilk, 66.

Table 3.2. Song Order: Main Changes.[65]

Stage:	Screen:
Praeludium	The Sound of Music
The Sound of Music	Praeludium
Maria	Maria
My Favorite Things	You Are Sixteen
Do-Re-Mi	My Favorite Things
You Are Sixteen	Do-Re-Mi
The Lonely Goatherd	The Sound of Music (reprise)
The Sound of Music (reprise)	The Lonely Goatherd
	Edelweiss

Among the most discussed of Lehman's changes is the fleshing out of Captain von Trapp. Plummer made no secret of his dislike of the character and purportedly worked closely with the screenwriter to add irony and complexity to the leading man. Certain added scenes attest to the beefing up of the Captain as a character. One example occurs when he sternly interrupts the singing of "My Favorite Things." Once the children return to bed, the Captain condescendingly asks Maria if she has "managed to remember" that he's leaving and registers incredulity at her request for playclothes for the children. Throughout, especially in his dealings with Max, the Captain clearly displays a sarcastic streak and a sense of humor. Lehman's added scenes expand on or subtly alter characterizations from the stage version. For example, the naughty behavior of the children is not only implied but shown when they place a frog in Maria's pocket. The new governess then turns their mischievousness back on to them during the newly written dinner scene. It is scenes such as these that help to distinguish the film from its stage counterpart.

[65]This table only includes the songs common to both versions. For a full comparison of song order and changes, see Appendix B.

Escapist or Socially Relevant?

Scholars vary in their opinions as to whether *The Sound of Music* offers purely escapist entertainment or addresses socio-political issues in any meaningful fashion. Barry Keith Grant dismisses the film as "a work of calculated sentimental claptrap" that "offered escapist entertainment in a turbulent time."[66] Less contemptuous of the film, Barry Langford nevertheless cites the film's ability to provide "a communal experience of release and uplift" as part and parcel of its extreme popularity.[67] As we will see throughout this section, these two authors are by no means alone in their view of the film as escapist entertainment. Farmer sums up the traditional viewpoint well in the statement that Andrews's roadshows are "glossed as a nostalgic 'last hurrah' of cultural traditionalism that offered audiences of the time an escapist respite from the social tumult of the 1960s."[68] Like me, Farmer does not buy into this view and goes on to say that "the extraordinary popularity of these films…highlights both their centrality to and embeddedness within their historical milieu."[69] Similarly, I will argue that the charge of pure escapism does not adequately take into account the film and its context.

The charge of escapism has been leveled at film musicals in every decade. For example, the frivolous, dance-heavy films of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers were similarly seen as escapist in their failure to directly address the Great Depression. However, Morris Dickstein complicates the relationship between art as escapism and the socio-economic conditions of the time. He claims Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers symbolized "movement that suggests genuine freedom" and "a dream of motion that appealed to people whose lives felt pinched, anxious,

[66]Barry Keith Grant, 16 and 17.

[67]Barry Langford, *Post-classical Hollywood: Film Industry, Style, and Ideology since 1945* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 104-5.

[68]Farmer, 117.

[69]Ibid., 117.

graceless, and static."[70] Therefore, the allure of the Fred and Ginger musicals went beyond simple escapism towards an ideal of economic and social freedom. In her article on *Mary Poppins* and *The Sound of Music*, Anne McLeer, in the vein of Frederic Jameson, argues that she "[implies] that all films, whatever their historical setting, always speak to the moment of their production in some way."[71] As this dissertation is predicated on the same supposition, I contend that though *The Sound of Music* may downplay or even remove some of the explicitly socially and politically minded elements, it retains a close connection to its time.

The early days of the pre-production period reveal much about the various attitudes concerning the political nature of the film. Before Wise agreed to direct the adaptation when his current project *The Sand Pebbles* was proposed, William Wyler was set to direct. The talented director, known for *The Heiress* (1949), *Roman Holiday* (1953), and the epic *Ben-Hur* (1959) among many others, apparently wanted to highlight the political aspects.[72] He claims that "I knew [the movie] wasn't really a political thing… but I had a tendency to want to make it, if not an anti-Nazi movie, at least say a few things."[73] Wyler planned to include tanks in a very visible Nazi invasion of Austria. According to Hirsch's research, Lehman became concerned after seeing books on Nazis in Wyler's office. Wise obviously took a more subtle approach, focusing not on the details of the invasion but other aspects.

One of the criticisms aimed at *The Sound of Music* in both incarnations is the musical's failure to adequately address race as a key concern in the Nazi takeover. David Desser condemns the film for avoiding race, stating that "the genocidal racism that helped the Nazis rise to power

[70]Morris Dickstein, *Dancing in the Dark: A Cultural History of the Great Depression* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009), 360.

[71]Anne McLeer, "Practical Perfection? The Nanny Negotiates Gender, Class, and Family Contradictions in 1960s Popular Culture," *NWSA Journal* 14: 2 (Summer 2002), 81.

[72]Wyler would go on to direct the film adaptation of *Funny Girl* in 1968.

[73]Qtd. in Hirsch, 15.

is repressed."[74] He judges the film against *The Pawnbroker* (1964), which provides an unflinching "portrayal of a man shattered by his experiences in the Nazi death camps" – a somewhat unfair comparison as the musical ends with the Anschluss and one family's escape.[75] Raymond Knapp points out the more ambiguous aspects of Max Detweiler's possible ethnicity. He acknowledges that Max "*might* be Jewish" but that his "complacent acquiescence" in the stage version makes a clear ethnic statement unlikely.[76] Andrea Most, however, immediately pegs Max as a Jew, casually calling him a "Jewish theater producer."[77] Max's love of money and casual mooching, readily apparent in lines such as "I like rich people. I like the way they live. I like the way I live when I'm with them," falls into a well-worn problematic stereotype of Jews. Of course, Max loves the von Trapp family – not only for their money. He is clearly a trusted friend, called Uncle Max by the children, and Georg and Maria leave the children in his care during their honeymoon. Furthermore, he helps the family escape to safety during the festival. These aspects of Max's character help to flesh him out as more than simply a comedic or offensive stereotype.

As mentioned in the previous sections, the songs which involve Max "How Can Love Survive?" and "No Way to Stop It" were cut from the film. Like Elsa, Max then becomes thoroughly unmusical despite his profession as a manager or impresario of musical acts. Sung primarily with Elsa Schraeder, and to some extent the Captain, these songs musicalize Max's cynicism and pragmatism. In "How Can Love Survive?," it is Max that predicts that Elsa and Georg's relationship will not last as they are both rich. As my discussion above suggests, Max

[74]Desser, 131.
[75]Ibid., 137.
[76]Knapp, *National Identity*, 231.
[77]Andrea Most, *Making Americans: Jews and the Broadway Musical* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 186.

firmly believes in the wealthy sharing their money (particularly with him) and identifies that they need someone who needs them or their money. In "No Way to Stop It," Max and Elsa attempt to convince the Captain to accept the inevitable and not challenge the Nazis.

Although he no longer sings, Max's lack of political convictions remains apparent in the film. Knapp notes that the representation of Max "comes uncomfortably close…to linking sophistication to *both* the Jews and to the spirit of accommodation that facilitated the Anschluss."[78] Of course, this possible troubling linkage is what brings complexity and even a sense of tragedy to the character. Max's ambivalence and refusal to get involved has the possibility of adding an element of tragic irony to the situation. The beloved friend's status as a Jew in Nazi-occupied Austria will likely cause removal to a concentration camp and even death. After the Anschluss, the diegetic rehearsal of a delicate version of the Ländler by a small ensemble underscores a tense conversation between Max and Herr Zeller. On the surface, the use of this piece might give credence to Zeller's insistence that "nothing in Austria has changed." The audience, however, would be aware of the reality of the situation. This piece instead is ironic in its placement while also connecting Max to the idealized rural Austria.

The Anschluss has not been stopped but occurred peacefully, and those who remain, like Max, will pay a horrible price. Perhaps the film does not explicitly deal with the racism and the coming Holocaust, but these aspects are lurking in the background of the film. For many people in the audiences in 1965, for whom World War II was in the not-so-distant-past, the coding of Max as Jewish and the implications of his staying in Austria would be very present within the film. Additionally, Max Detweiler's real-life analog was a Catholic priest named Father Franz Wasner – a man who was instrumental in the musical development of the family and even left

[78]Knapp, *National Identity*, 234.

Austria with them. The creators of *The Sound of Music* then actually inserted a Jewish presence into the story through Max, who does not escape with the von Trapps but stays in Austria to face a bleak future.

Andrea Most claims that "the fact that Rodgers and Hammerstein wrote a play about escape from the Nazis in which the heroes are not Jews, but Austrian Catholics, is further proof of their apparent need to distance Jews from contemporary immigrant stories."[79] However, this statement as well as other reproaches do not sufficiently allow for several key aspects of the musical, including its basis in a real-life story. She specifically proposes that the musical exemplifies a move by Rodgers and Hammerstein, despite the fact that Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse wrote the book. Therefore, *The Sound of Music* is not quite a "Rodgers and Hammerstein musical" in the same way that *Oklahoma!*, *Carousel*, or others are. Furthermore, Linsday and Crouse's story is a fictionalized account of a true story, drawing from the actual lives of the von Trapps. The von Trapps were indeed Catholic – a major identifier especially considering that Maria left a convent to marry Georg von Trapp. Also, the need for Austrian Catholics to escape Nazi rule is quite historically accurate. While not suffering atrocities on the same scale as Jews, the Catholic Church was also persecuted by the vehemently anti-Catholic Nazi regime.[80]

Directly related to the issue of race and Jewishness is the film's treatment of politics. Jones observes that the play's "dialogue contains a gradual build-up of explicit references to Germany and the Third Reich (only nine such passages in the entire play), with the effect that the Nazi takeover of Austria shifts almost imperceptibly from being the musical's background to its

[79]Most, 186

[80]See Richard Steigmann-Gall, *The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919-1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003) for an exploration of the Nazis' religious views, and their differing perceptions and treatments of Protestants and Catholics.

foreground."[81] Wolf declares that "not surprisingly, the mass-culture venue of the film also compromises the political edge of the play version."[82]The film does remove or alter some of the scenes to which Jones refers. For instance, Franz's own inclinations in the film are more subtle from the audience's perspective as his statement "if the Germans did take over Austria, we'd have efficiency" was part of a cut scene between him and Frau Schmidt.[83] Instead, the butler cautiously asks young Rolf if there are "any developments," to which Rolf vaguely replies "perhaps." The film also cuts Max's explicit connection with the Third Reich and his rise in status after the Anschluss – the impresario instead begrudgingly accepts the change in regime and seemingly prefers to remain under the radar. The omission of the only overtly political song "No Way to Stop It" sung by Captain von Trapp, Elsa Schraeder, and Max Detweiler removes the musicalization of their various political convictions (or lack thereof). Nevertheless, the Captain's love for his country and hatred of Nazis continues to come on strong. Several scenes highlight this. During his own party, the Captain enters into an argument with Herr Zeller about the German versus Austrian debate. And later in the film, he takes down the Nazi flag that has been affixed to his home and tears it apart.

The film does indeed engage in the type of ideological work that Rodgers and Hammerstein had become known for providing a "solution to America at war through the glorification of family, community, and the nation."[84] Gerald Mast argues that the political turmoil in which the country found itself due the Kennedy's assassination and the Vietnam War, among other things, gave the film greater relevance as it

[81]Jones, 159.
[82]Wolf, *Problem Like Maria*, 218.
[83]Richard Rodgers, et al., *The Sound of Music: A New Musical Play* (New York: Random House, 1960), 25.
[84]Bruce Kirle, *Unfinished Show Business: Broadway Musicals as Works-in-Process* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005), 104.

> transported a scarred generation of Americans out of the present's lack of political clarity and social cohesion, back to a past when Western moral values and American social purpose seemed clear and coherent. Where and how could clarity and coherency be found again if not back there - in what America was and what Americans believed in the battle against the Nazis?[85]

Once again, the relevance does not occur through a heavy-handed political stance but in the context and the implications of the events in and after the diegesis. McLeer goes even further by drawing direct parallels between the Nazi threat and the communist threat "as well as threats to the conservative nation from internal generational, racial, and gender movements and counter-culture ideologies."[86] The debate surrounding the political component can be summarized as advocacy for content versus context. While the film certainly downplays some of the original show's political content, the context and ideological stance, as Mast aptly point out, make the political nature of the story a very real presence.

The music accompanying the scenes that feature references to the Anschluss or Nazis reveals the film's view about the impending war. Many exchanges – especially those that indicate Rolf's growing interest and allegiance to the Third Reich – have no musical underscoring. This lack of music not only places the dialogue in stark contrast to the light-hearted musical numbers but adds tension. In one significant conversation, Rolf exclaims "Heil Hitler" when embarrassed at being caught throwing stones at Liesl's window by her father. This awkward encounter and the ensuing discussion contains no background instrumental music. However, once the Captain proclaims that he inhabits a "world that's disappearing," a brief snippet of "Edelweiss" cues the audience into the anti-Nazi nationalism that this disappearing world encompasses. At the party that the Captain throws for Baroness Schraeder, a small

[85]Gerald Mast, *Can't Help Singin': The American Musical on Stage and Screen* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 1987), 218.

[86]McLeer, 97.

orchestra plays a number of tunes as dances, including a waltz version of "My Favorite Things" and of course the Ländler. A barely civil exchange between Captain von Trapp and Herr Zeller is accompanied by a waltz version of the processional music from the Captain and Maria's wedding. Knapp points out how the film draws parallels between the marriage of the two protagonists and the marriage between Austria and Germany, identifying the associational montage of bells that links the personal union with the larger one.[87] The wedding music turned dance music begins with Maria's invitation to join the others for dinner and continues through the Anschluss discussion. Thus, this waltz reinforces Knapp's assertion as the dance music foreshadows both the upcoming wedding and the Anschluss.

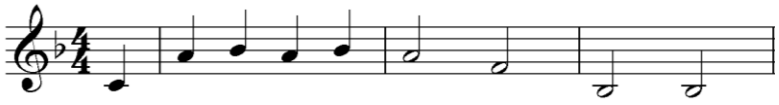
Once the Anschluss occurs, the film alternately employs musical silence and underscoring in significant ways, now meaningfully deploying familiar tunes. As discussed above, a diegetic group softly practices the Ländler for the festival as Herr Zeller confronts Max about the Captain's absence. Musical silence occurs during the Captain's dramatic tearing of the Nazi flag and his subsequent argument with Max about the peaceful circumstances of the German takeover. However, strains of "Something Good" and "Edelweiss" enter as the Captain shares the news of his military orders with Maria (Example 3.1). The use of pieces from both of these songs ties together the newlyweds love for each other and their mutual love of their country, symbolically connecting their bond as both romantic love and patriotism. After the festival, a brief version of "My Favorite Things" alternates with "Edelweiss" as the von Trapps seek asylum at the abbey (Example 3.2). No music plays while the Nazi soldiers search the abbey graveyard. Then, Rolf betrays the von Trapps and calls the others as dramatic music leads to a strident version of "when the dog bites" from "My Favorite Things" and a distorted motive

[87]Knapp, *National Identity*, 230.

from “So Long, Farewell” (Example 3.3). The distorted pieces from familiar tunes highlight the family’s plight as well as the Nazi threat. The Nazis are the dog that bites and the reason that the von Trapps must say so long to their homeland.

Example 3.1. Captain Receives Military Orders: *a*, “Something Good;” *b*, “Edelweiss.”[88]

a



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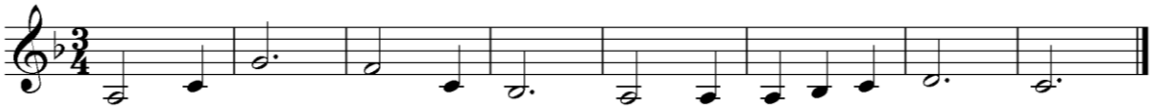
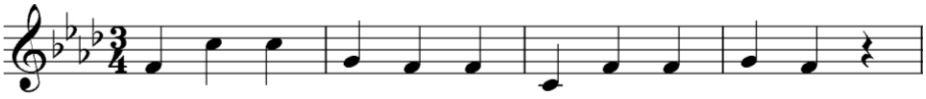


Example 3.2. Excerpt from “My Favorite Things” Melody.



Edelweiss
My Favorite Things
from THE SOUND OF MUSIC
Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II
Music by Richard Rodgers
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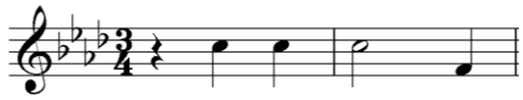
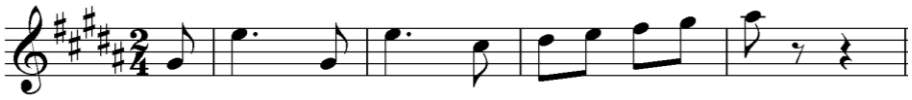
[88]Unless otherwise noted, *The Sound of Music* examples are drawn from, Richard Rodgers, et al., *The Sound of Music*, Vocal Selections (New York: Williamson Music, 1959) and Richard Walters, ed., *The Singer’s Musical Theatrre Anthology: Soprano Volume 3* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2000).

Example 3.3. Escaping the Nazis: *a*, "When the dog bites;" *b*, "So Long Farewell."
a



b



So Long, Farewell
from THE SOUND OF MUSIC
Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II
Music by Richard Rodgers

Knapp's discussion of the play and film shows how they promotes a specifically American nationalist ideal, exploring aspects of World War II from an American perspective. He claims that *The Sound of Music* works with three components, "America's promise, its groundedness, and it postwar position."[89] Its depiction of Europe – decidedly inaccurate at points – and the representation of characters – especially Maria – reflect American ideological concerns. Knapp asserts that the film "reaffirms the nostalgic mythology that undergirds most nationalist ideologies, including our own; the myth of a rural world close to nature that retains the essence of a lost paradise threatened by modern urbanity."[90] The ways in which the film brings out the musical's Americanness vis-à-vis Maria, the Captain, and the connection to a rural

[89]Knapp, *National Identity*, 233.
[90]Ibid., 234.

aesthetic will be further discussed in subsequent sections. However, it is important to note here the film's American perspective in the context of socio-political concerns.

Another point of discussion can be found in how the adaptation handles social content. As Wolf, McLeer, and Knapp assert, the film promotes classlessness through Maria's ease in navigating a successful transition from peasant/working-class status to wife of a wealthy sea captain. Wolf asserts that the film's "ideological work hinges on Maria's mobility in an American cultural context."[91] McLeer also discusses the erasure of class difference and its service to a nationalist imperative, claiming that Maria "seems to seamlessly cross class barriers" and "woos her employer…by displaying her affiliation to the Austrian peasantry."[92] In fact, the film achieves a sense of classlessness through the glorification of "peasantry," working-class values, and the folk aesthetic as I will discuss in the section on folk. The stage version calls attention to class through the song "How Can Love Survive?," which implies that two rich, upper-class lovers are doomed to fail. Thus, the omission of this song assumes class to be a much less significant obstacle; the audience does not need to be prepared for the Captain and Maria's union through a song that explains "when you are poor, it is *toujours l'amour*."[93] Maria easily and unproblematically ousts the elegant Baroness with her vitality, breathing life into the stiff, upper class milieu of the von Trapp household.

As Wolf, McLeer, and other scholars have indicated, *The Sound of Music* puts forth a socially conservative ideology. It promotes nationalism, family values, and traditional gender roles, and all of these elements are tied together, reinforcing one another. In this way, the musical

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[91]Wolf, *Problem Like Maria*, 223.

[92]McLeer, 94.

[93]"How Can Love Survive" by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II

might be read, like McLeer does, as a nostalgic elevation of so-called 1950s ideals. Maria's major victory is to restore Captain von Trapp to the head of the family as a benevolent patriarch and then join the family to complete the unit. Yet, as I explore in the next section, the characterization of Maria and the other women in the film is much more complicated than the simple narrative move suggests. Like the other socio-political elements addressed or implied in the film, a sort of ambivalence reigns and allows for a multiplicity of readings. Desser contends that Julie Andrews and *The Sound of Music* "were the epitome if traditional wholesome values to many Americans, but simultaneously they were also the object of derision to many others."[94] Other scholars (including myself), however, argue for a more nuanced explanation. The ambivalence within the messages of the film is indicative of the socio-political instability of mid-1960s, letting audiences indulge in both nostalgia for a simpler, mythic past and connect with more progressive ideals.

Femininity and Feminism

The musical, whether in its theatrical or film form, is a notoriously feminine genre. The claim refers to both the performers/characters and the audience connected to the genre as a whole. Divas represent one of the hallmarks of musical theater from Ethel Merman and Judy Garland to Barbra Streisand and Liza Minelli to Patti Lupone and Bernadette Peters. The unique voices and powerful presence of women have dominated the Broadway stage and silver screen. Stacy Wolf sums up the situation by stating that in musicals men are "defined in relation to women; they are secondary. Women sing more (and more interesting) songs; they take up more stage space."[95] *Annie Get Your Gun* (1946), *South Pacific* (1949), *Gypsy* (1959), *Once Upon a Mattress* (1959), *Sweet Charity* (1966), *Wicked* (2003) – the list goes on – all feature formidable,

[94]Desser, 152.
[95]Stacy Wolf, *Problem Like Maria*, 41.

musically interesting female roles. Peter Krämer observes this affinity for female protagonists in the major mid-60s superhits (i.e. *Mary Poppins*, *My Fair Lady*, and *The Sound of Music*). Brett Farmer observes that this is especially the case in Andrews's musicals, as her "male costars [are] relegated to the secondary, even marginalized role."[96] This female primacy in musicals led to a correspondingly female audience. Mid-sixties musicals tended to target a larger family audience, though Farmer proposes that "there is evidence to indicate that they were especially popular with women."[97] Looking specifically at Julie Andrews's musicals, Farmer points to commentators' remarks on female audiences. As Krämer and others have noted, the target audience shifted in the late sixties and seventies to a younger, male audience. However, the continued popularity of Julie Andrews and Barbra Streisand reveal that films and stars perceived to cater to women's tastes had not completely disappeared.

As I touched on in the introduction, second-wave feminism was a major force in the mid-sixties; and *The Sound of Music* might be seen to interact with the movement in various ways. Betty Friedan and other feminists advocated for women in the workplace rather than the domestic sphere. In *The Sound of Music*, Maria represents both a strong female lead and a married homemaker. Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals notoriously promote the nuclear family. Like *South Pacific*'s Nellie Forbush, Maria enters a ready-made family and completes the group as wife and mother. While she begins as a headstrong women, Maria becomes subsumed into the family unit. Tellingly, the children make a big show of calling Maria "mother" in the film version. At the level of narrative, Maria's independence is curbed once she marries Captain von Trapp. Yet scholars have attempted to reconcile this problematic trajectory with the power of Andrews's performance and a feminist aesthetic.

[96]Farmer, 122.
[97]Ibid., 119.

In "The Singing Sixties: Julie Andrews and the Roadshow Musical," Brett Farmer recontextualizes Julie Andrews and the roadshow musical in terms of the significance of this genre and Andrews in particular for the mid-1960s. He admits that the sixtiess musical is traditionally "glossed as a nostalgic 'last hurrah' of cultural traditionalism that offered audiences of the time an escapist respite from the social tumult of the 1960s" yet argues that "the extraordinary popularity of these films…highlights both their centrality to and embeddedness within their cultural milieux," a proposition with which I agree wholeheartedly. [98] He continues to explore predominance of females in Andrews's typical audience as well as in her persona both onscreen and off. Although the star has become known for a sugary sweet wholesomeness, Farmer shows, by looking at contemporary popular press, that her image is much more complex. Andrews conjured strength and feminine agency through her tomboy persona and powerhouse performances.

The author contends that Andrews's powerful presence coupled with the dual-focus narrative of musicals responds "ambivalently and contradictorily" to the specter of second-wave feminism.[99] Farmer uses *The Sound of Music* as a key example of how this works. In the iconic opening sequence, Maria emerges "as a powerful figure of authoritative presence who…dominates the physical landscape around her."[100] He also argues that the repressive atmosphere that occurs after the marriage between Maria and Captain von Trapp "evoke[s] a strong desire for escape from the repressive constraints of Maria's post-marital containment and a return to the exuberant spaces of musical expression that characterise the earlier parts of the film."[101] I would add that the dominance that Farmer identifies in Maria early on overshadows

[98]Farmer, 117.
[99]Ibid., 123.
[100]Ibid., 122.
[101]Ibid., 123.

the apparent submission found in the final part of the film. The audience leaves with a sharper memory of the character's defiance, ability to influence and inspire the von Trapp family, incredible energy, and wonderful singing. Maria's subdued presence after marriage is so ill-fitting with her disposition that it rings false.

Stacy Wolf has also reevaluated Julie Andrews and her portrayal of Maria, coming from a feminist and queer perspective. Like Farmer, Wolf acknowledges but moves beyond the perception of Andrews as inherently sweet and innocent, focusing instead on her difference. She describes Maria as having a streak of "independence and singularity, tempered by a certain emotional vulnerability and physical awkwardness."[102] Wolf offers a compelling reading of Mary Martin, Julie Andrews, and *The Sound of Music* coupled with ethnographic work that explores the meanings that the film and Andrews have had for lesbian spectators.[103] She discusses Maria's relationship with other females, positing an emphasis on homosociality in the musical. Although she leaves the life of the abbey, Maria remains supported by the female world of the nuns. Wolf also explores Maria's unique connections with the Mother Abbess and Liesl – relationships that parallel one another in terms of "nurturance" and "domination."[104] Ultimately, Wolf contends that the marriage between Maria and the Captain "does little to shift the female focus in the world of the musical."[105] Unlike the traditional reading of the film, the author does not see a fundamental change in character or move toward subordination in Maria. She claims that the reprise of "How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria?" during the wedding procession serves as a "reminder that, in spite of a wedding, Maria hasn't changed and the 'problem' is still

[102]Wolf, *Problem Like Maria*, 225.

[103]See above discussion on "The Show" for Mary Martin's essential role in the development of the stage production, a production that was built around her. See Wolf for an extended discussion of Martin as the original Maria.

[104]Ibid., 232.

[105]Ibid., 232.

there."[106] In this way, Wolf reclaims the conventional heterosexual narrative for a queer perspective, refusing to see Maria as giving herself up.

One significant way in which the film might be seen to intersect with modern issues concerns the multitude of children in the von Trapp family. By 1965, the birth control pill was widely available to women but still highly controversial. Both Maria and the von Trapps are firmly rooted in the Catholic faith, which outspokenly opposes the pill or any other form of birth control. Thus, the seven von Trapp children inherently are signifiers of Catholicism. While Maria is a devout Catholic, even studying to be a nun, she displays no small amount of trepidation at the prospect of being confronted with so many children. Of course, the number of children does not alter in the move from stage to film, and later productions can also accrue new readings. However, any anxiety that this might create is highlighted in the film. Julie Andrews addresses the issue of the seven children during interviews conducted for the 40th anniversary of the film. She claims that she attempted to bring out Maria's incredulity and even fear of so many children as a means of keeping the film from being too syrupy. Maria's difficulty in accepting the number of children that she must care for does not mesh with a good Catholic upbringing, but it does fall in line with a modern woman's condition of choice.

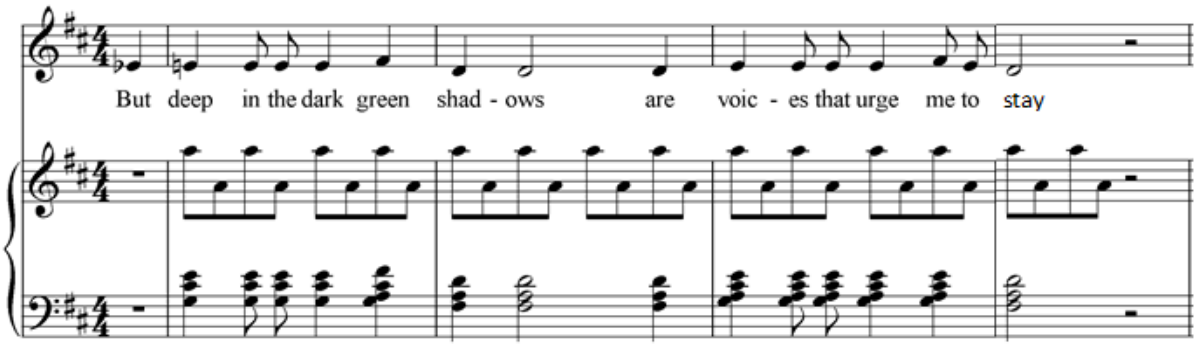
The added song "I Have Confidence" further stresses Maria's anxiety over the situation. The lyrics directly refer to the difficulty of dealing with so many children with lines such as "A captain with seven children…what's so fearsome about that?" and "And all those children (Heaven bless them!)." Andrews's performance underscores these lines. When discussing the song, she admits to having trouble with singing the lyrics and therefore chose to play it as babbling in an expenditure of nervous energy. The buoyant uptempo melody with a forceful

[106]Ibid., 228.

delivery creates a sense of bravado as Maria tries to convince herself that she has the confidence to face so many children. The song begins with a slower, contemplative introduction that is partially derived from the omitted opening of the song "The Sound of Music." (Example 3.4). For viewers familiar with the original cast recording, this shared music would confirm the song as Maria's as well as her aura of freedom. It begins in common time and the bulk of the song is in cut time, both adequately accommodating the walking that occurs throughout and providing a drive which mirrors Maria's determination. The multiple key changes reflect the character's vacillation between doubt in herself and growing confidence. Similarly, the melodic lines alternate between descending and ascending movement (Example 3.5). The song culminates in an ascending line that ends on the highest note in the song, which showcases Andrews's range as well as Maria's decision to display self-assurance (Example 3.6).

Example 3.4. *a*, "The Sound of Music;" *b*, "I Have Confidence."

a



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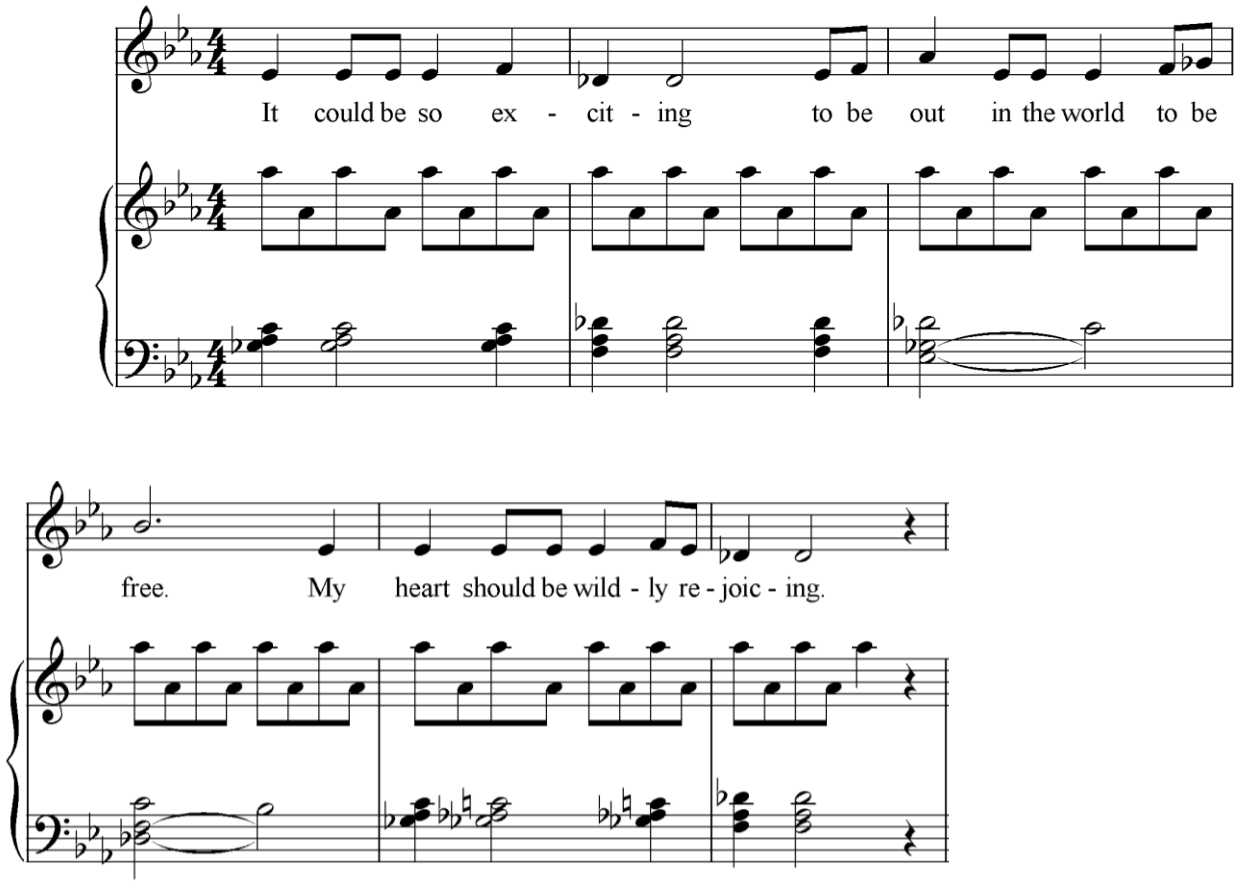
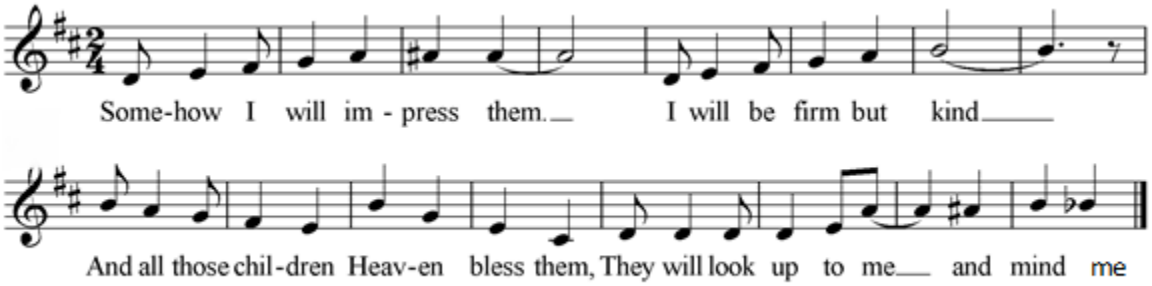
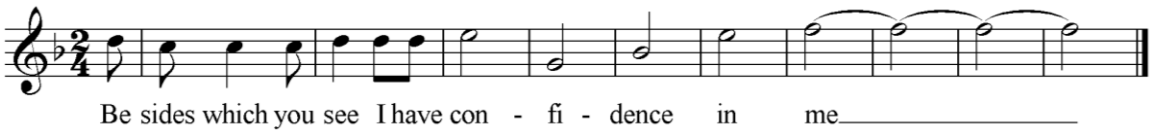


Example 3.5. Maria Vascillates.



Example 3.6. Maria's Rising Confidence.



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Music by Richard Rodgers
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As must be evident by the preceding discussion, Julie Andrews dominates the film and the literature surrounding the film. It is difficult to talk or write about *The Sound of Music* at all without acknowledging her role in the film and its success. Andrews sings all or part of seven songs in the film, dominating the musical numbers. Her male co-star Christopher Plummer freely

admits in interviews that she carried the film and "seduced the world."[107] Like Farmer and Wolf, I find the initial characterization of Maria and Julie Andrews's performance so strong that it negates the seeming conventionality of the implications of traditional gender roles in the final minutes. The reprise of "How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria?" during the wedding and Maria's troubling assertion that when you fall in love "you belong to him" in the reprise of "Sixteen Going on Seventeen" presents a highly problematic vision of married life. Yet it is the independent and highly vocal version of Maria with whom Captain von Trapp fell in love. With her incredible vitality and musicality, she saved both the Captain and his oh-so-daunting seven children, charming them all and making them realize that they cannot live without her. Why then must we assume that she has fundamentally changed for the remainder of her married life? As I outlined above, Wolf certainly does not think Maria changes. The nods to traditional gender roles then appear forced and insincere. Maria, the audience has learned in the last two and a half hours, is unruly and wonderful. And despite the obligatory resolution of the dual-focus narrative, she will remain so.

As one of Andrews's "nanny" roles, *The Sound of Music* represents a key part of Julie Andrews's star persona as discussed in the section on the film's "players." Part of Andrews's perceived power and willfulness comes from her roles in *Mary Poppins* and *The Sound of Music* as an authority figure who continually subverts authority. Mary Poppins appears straight-laced yet openly ignores Mr. Banks's desires and commands and brings magic and joy into the lives of the children. Knapp identifies

> the transformation of the main character from a stern, unsentimental woman to someone who tries to be stern but can't seem to manage it, who is nearly always gentle of voice, and whose features soften fairly often into an indulgent smile and occasionally slide perilously close to simpering.[108]

[107]Andrews, et al., "My Favorite Things."
[108]Knapp, *National Identity*, 141.

as one of the main elements that allows American audiences to connect with the film and its central character. Maria, however, never gives any appearance of being stern; she is instead warm and loving while still defiant. Despite the Captain's refusal to provide material for play clothes, Maria simply uses her old curtains – and the decision is made with a mischievous smirk and a brief reprise of "My Favorite Things." Although the Captain might seem to be the dog who bites, Maria determinedly gets her "girls in white dresses with blue satin sashes."[109] Once the Captain returns from Vienna, Maria openly challenges his cold behavior towards the children. Lehman added some more kick to this scene – now by the lake – by making Maria's railing even more outspoken and harsh. Furthermore, Maria does not apologize for her heated speech as in the stage production. She remains defiant until the Captain realizes the error of his ways just a short time later.

While undeniably central, Maria/Julie Andrews does not provide the sole image of femininity in *The Sound of Music*. Of the adult characters, the Mother Abbess and Baroness Schraeder each present a different type of femininity than Maria. Furthermore, they are both significantly altered, especially through music, from their characterization in the stage version. In the original stage production, Maria sings "My Favorite Things" with the Mother Abbess. The Reverend Mother had heard Maria singing this song while working in the abbey and recognized it from her own childhood. She thus joins in Maria's singing and feels the same sort of abandon that Maria experiences. This song as a duet between the postulant and Mother Abbess strengthens their personal relationship, giving them an opportunity to bond through music – the

[109]"My Favorite Things" by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II

show's central theme. Therefore, the absence of the duet results in the Mother Abbess's inability to connect with Maria on a fundamental level. The song also softens the older woman's character. Without it, the Mother Abbess in the film is tolerant, kind, loving, and wise but sterner and less fun-loving than her stage counterpart. While she does sing in both "How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria" and the solo "Climb Every Mountain," these songs are not acknowledged in the film as songs but are rather woven into the plot. In this way, her concerns and advice are given weight through musicalization without the explicit, diegetic connection to Maria's musical self.

Elsa Schraeder undergoes an even more significant change than the Mother Abbess. The film confers a title upon her not given in the stage version. In reality, Georg von Trapp was a Baron and apparently had a relationship with a Princess before marrying Maria. The film's decision to make Elsa Schraeder a baroness gives her an elegance and status that provides a sharp contrast to the tomboy, would-be nun Maria. Casting Eleanor Parker as the cool, elegant baroness also brought something extra to the character. By the time she made *The Sound of Music*, Parker had enjoyed a successful Hollywood career for nearly twenty-five years. She appeared opposite a number of leading actors that qualified as Hollywood royalty, including Clark Gable, Kirk Douglas, Charleton Heston, and Frank Sinatra. Not only beautiful but a talented and versatile actress, Parker had been nominated for three Oscars for her roles in *Caged* (1950), *Detective Story* (1951), and *Interrupted Melody* (1955). She thus brought an old-world Hollywood glamour to her portrayal of Baroness Schraeder.

The alterations that Lehman and other collaborators made to Elsa Schraeder make her a much more unsympathetic character. In the stage version, she sings two songs, "How Can Love Survive?" and "No Way to Stop It," with Max and the Captain. The film cuts these songs. The

most glaring result is that Elsa becomes entirely unmusical. In musicals, characters who do not sing traditionally come across as unlikeable in some fashion (e.g. Parthy in *Show Boat*), and the baroness is no exception. When juxtaposed with the warm, highly musical Maria, Elsa appears cold and unfeeling. While she somewhat snidely comments to Max that he should have told to her to bring her harmonica to Salzburg, the Baroness shows no musical abilities. She cannot sing or play the guitar. Her lack of musical aptitude results in a failure to successfully integrate herself into the family unit; she simply lacks the capacity.

Some additional scenes compound the audience's impression of the baroness as ultimately unsympathetic. The Baroness purposefully prompts Maria to leave the family in an effort to get rid of a rival.[110] She bluntly tells Maria that she is in love with the Captain and he "thinks he's in love with you too." In the stage version, the truthful-to-a-fault Brigitta delivers this revelation. Lehman's switch from a precocious child to the Baroness as the bearer of frightening news makes her much more spiteful. Once she has succeeded in causing Maria's departure, the Baroness fails to bond with the children. While Maria sang with them, Elsa rather inadequately plays a number game with a ball. The whole group clearly displays boredom; when the children try to make the game more exciting, Baroness Schraeder cannot keep up. Tellingly, when Max teases her about becoming the stepmother of seven children, Elsa replies with "there's this lovely little thing called boarding school." This line is added for the film. In the stage version, the children *already* attend boarding school. This key change turns Elsa into the proverbial evil stepmother, choosing to send the children away rather than learn to love them. This underscores her inability to fit into the newfound intimacy of the von Trapp family.

[110]Wolf reads the Baroness as a "vampire lesbian," using the bedroom scene between her and Maria as well as her relationship with the possibly gay-coded Max as evidence, *Problem Like Maria*, 226.

Not only does the removal of "How Can Love Survive?" and "No Way to Stop It" render Elsa unmusical and unsympathetic, it also changes her relationship with Georg von Trapp. Before the Captain's transformation from stern, emotionally distant father to a caring and musical one, he confesses to Elsa that he considers her his savior. In this added scene, the couple shares an intimate conversation. They are presented as quite compatible without the children. Only when the Captain rediscovers his love for his children does the Baroness not fit in. She represents wealth, glittering parties and elegant city life, not a comfortable domestic life in a rural Austrian setting. Despite their familiarity and comfort, the Baroness seems more detached than in the stage version. In the original script, Elsa observes that "there seems to be something standing in the way" of Georg's affections before singing "How Can Love Survive?" In the film, she is much more confident in his regard yet more detached, claiming she is "very fond" of Georg.

The social and political dimensions that are lost in translation are discussed in another section. However, it is necessary to mention here how the lack of these elements makes the reasons for their breakup more superficial. Elsa admits to Georg that she "needs someone who needs me. Or at least needs my money." While this statement alludes to the fact that they are both rich as part of the problem, she does not sing an ironically prescient song about their mutual wealth as an obstacle. Moreover, without "No Way to Stop It," the reasons for the breakup are more personal. While Elsa Schraeder remains more politically apathetic than the Captain, they do not have a heated disagreement about political ideals. They simply recognize that they do not love one another.

Folk connections

While the real Trapp Family Singers included folk music in their repertoire, *The Sound of Music* highlights its role in their musical development. In the context of their actual life, "folk music" refers to traditional songs that had been transmitted aurally and connected to an idealized, rural aesthetic. Maria Kutschera von Trapp explains that she and the children loved to sing Austrian folksongs together for fun. The priest Father Wasner heard the talent of the group and became instrumental in their musical and professional development. Maria claims that he "acquainted us with the glory of the a cappella music of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries."[111] And it was the polyphonic vocal music of the Western art music tradition that would become the core of their repertoire. The family even sang Mozart's "Ave Verum" for Pope Pius XII at the Vatican. However, Austrian folk music also appeared in the group's concerts. Maria also describes how their American manager F.C Schang helped them evolve by "loosening up our repertoire in order to take in a whole group of genuine folk songs from all lands."[112] From Maria's accounts, it is clear that while folk music was a substantial part of the family's musical life, it was only part of the story and their professional careers contained a mixture of art and vernacular repertoires.

As the story goes, Mary Martin and husband Richard Halliday had originally envisioned Maria's story as a play with a few songs that the von Trapps sang in real life. Martin expressed the thought that maybe a Rodgers and Hammerstein song or two to supplement the source music would be a nice addition. As discussed in an earlier section, Rodgers insisted that they write the entire score. Thus, the show gained a Rodgers and Hammerstein Broadway-style score with hints of the folk. Once the story became a musical, the relationship with and meanings of folk music

[111]Von Trapp, 66.
[112]Ibid., 75.

become much more complicated. The musical begins to index not only traditional music from Austria but the folk revival as explored in the introduction. As I will explore, the stage version and especially the film, forge a bond between Maria and the Captain through their connection to folk music.

The stage production, however, had the added advantage of having folksinger Theodore Bikel cast as the Captain. Austrian-born singer Bikel sang Jewish folk songs in a number of albums in the 1950s, was part of the group of folk musicians that performed in Washington Square, and was a co-founder of the famous Newport Folk Festival. As a performer then, Bikel embodies both the traditional folk music as performed by the actual von Trapp family and the American folk movement so prevalent in the 1960s. As such, he brought an "image of authenticity and connectedness to a mythical past and enduring tradition" that folk revivalists such as The Weavers or Pete Seeger traded in.[113] This image had much to do with Bikel being cast since, though both a singer and actor, he had never been in a musical before. Bikel remembers that "Mary Martin told me later that after I had done my folk song at the audition, she'd leaned forward, tapped Dick Rogers on the shoulder, and whispered, 'We don't have to look any further do we?'"[114] Not only did casting Bikel as the Captain conjure folk-related associations but the creators actually shaped parts of the show around him due to this. "Edelweiss" was a late addition to the musical because "they [Rodgers and Hammerstein] argued that [Bikel's] 'special talents' had not been fully used in the show, and that [his] folk background and [his] guitar playing could be used to better advantage."[115] Thus, the most explicit reference to folksong was born to accommodate the presence of a genuine folksinger.

[113]Zak, 63-4.
[114]Qtd. in Wilk, 24.
[115]Qtd. in Wilk, 33.

At the core of the folk revival stood one instrument – the guitar. And *The Sound of Music,* in both its stage and screen incarnations, features a diegetic guitar. Maria brings the instrument, presumably a relic from her secular life that the nuns inexplicably let her keep, to the von Trapp household from the Abbey. While members of the von Trapp family played various instruments, including violin and guitar, the strict Austrian convent would certainly not have let the youthful novice play. Nevertheless, the presence of the guitar in the musical conjures a folksy feel to the musical proceedings and would have the more specific connection of the folk revival to American audiences. Despite its setting, *The Sound of Music* is considered a consummately American work. Richard Rodgers's music employs the forms, harmonies, and melodic language of American musical theater and follows his own stylistic hallmark of spinning out melodies from a relatively limited amount of notes and employing rich harmonies. As mentioned in the section on social and political issues, themes that Oscar Hammerstein's lyrics and the book by Howard Lindsey and Russell Crouse address also reflect particularly American concerns. Indeed, the very presence of the guitar would index folk in its American popular form, calling to mind images from the folk revival and singer/songwriter trend for many American viewers.[116]

Of course as mentioned above, the stage version included the folk connection in order to showcase actor and folksinger Theodore Bikel. The film further underscores an aura of folk despite the lack of a performer like Bikel (or perhaps to compensate for the absence of such a performer). With the connection to folk comes the discourse of authenticity, which the film attempts to harness in certain songs. As many scholars have pointed out, *The Sound of Music,* as the title suggests, is explicitly about music. Inherent in the plot is the ability of music to fill a void in both the Captain and the children. The musical posits that music is needed to live a full

[116]Knapp briefly mentions this very connection in his discussion of the musical, *National Identity*, 236.

and happy life as well as implying that anyone can love and create music. The use of the guitar in both the visuals and music implies a naturalness as espoused by many folk revivalists in the 1950s and 1960s.

As the most musical character in the film, Maria is at first associated with the guitar. She carries it around Salzburg while singing the rousing "I Have Confidence." The first time she plays the instrument, however, occurs nearly an hour into the film during "Do Re Mi." Wise and his collaborators moved this song to later in the plot. In the stage version, Maria uses "Do Re Mi" as an icebreaker directly after meeting the children. In the film, they sing the song after the children have already warmed to their new governess. Maria frames the song as a pedagogical tool so that the children may learn to sing and entertain Baroness Schraeder. Fittingly, the group receives their lesson outdoors on a hill. As the stunning and famous opening sequence showed, nature and specifically the Austrian mountains are intertwined with Maria's vitality and musicality. Thus, the hill provides a fitting place for Maria to impart these qualities to the von Trapp children. Furthermore, the connection between nature and music adds a layer of folk authenticity to the proceedings, implicitly linking the rural landscape and simplicity to music making. Maria unpretentiously pulls out her guitar and sits on a rock to teach the kids.

The instrumental accompaniment offers an interesting mix between a singer/songwriter aesthetic and that of a polished Hollywood studio orchestra. The Broadway cast recording of this song does not emphasize guitar. In the film, Maria briefly "tunes" her guitar and begins playing a vamp (picking out an octave on F) to accompany the opening vocal line. As Maria sings the heart of the song, "doe, a deer…" and so on, the non-diegetic orchestra enters. The orchestral instruments begin at a very soft dynamic. The guitar remains prominent in the soundscape and outlines chords, which betokens a simplicity that the song demands. As the orchestra grows

louder, Maria still plays the guitar but its sound no longer dominates the instrumentation. At this point, there is a decided disconnect between what the audience sees and hears. The visuals continue to promote a folk or singer/songwriter ideal while the sound has moved entirely into the realm of the professional film orchestra. When Maria stops playing the guitar altogether, the guitar does indeed drop out. However, it reenters in a higher register – now without Maria playing onscreen. And in fact, the syncopation in the guitar with strings underneath as the children yell out the solfege syllables even emphasizes the guitar. The song soon moves away from the simplicity of the beginning to instead become a sort of travelogue through Salzburg. The beginning of "Do-Re-Mi," however, strongly indexes the American folk revival through its use of the guitar.

Although at first connected with Maria, the guitar becomes more closely associated with Captain von Trapp. In the stage production, folksinger Bikel played the guitar onstage in his performance of "Edelweiss" towards the end of the musical. Max Wilk has noted that the song "created its own aura. People automatically assumed it was a traditional Austrian folk ballad."[117] In 1984, Ronald Reagan famously quoted "Edelweiss" in his address to the Austrian president.[118] Reagan's amusing faux pas is indicative of the song's place in American minds despite it being resoundingly American. Indeed, Julie Andrews describes the song as being universal rather than specifically Austrian in its patriotism. She claims that the song is "about any homeland," and it is this sense of love for one's country and its values that resonates with so many people.[119] Wilk

[117]Wilk, 34.

[118]This speech is widely available through the Reagan Presidential Library and Museum website. Not only does Reagan mention Maria von Trapp, he states "At one point in 'The Sound of Music,'' the character who plays Baron von Trapp sings a song about the edelweiss, an Austrian flower. And before the song ends, the lyrics become a prayer for Austria itself. It is a prayer Americans join in – 'Blossom of snow, may you bloom and grow -- and bless your homeland forever.'" http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1984/22884c.htm. Accessed December 9, 2013.

[119]Andrews, et al., "The Making of *The Sound of Music*."

also uses the word "authenticity" to describe the song and its impact.[120] The film capitalizes on the sense of authenticity already present in the stage production.

Similar to Maria's dual connection to folk and nature, the Captain's association with the landscape is highlighted in the film. Despite the fact that he is aristocracy, Captain von Trapp has a similar relationship to the countryside as the spirited Maria. It is this relationship that sets up the pair as compatible and aids in the ideal of classlessness so important to both the folk revival and the social message of the film. Elsa Schraeder, the epitome of urban cosmopolitanism, observes Georg's connectedness to the country in both versions of the musical. In the film, however, the Captain himself emphasizes and comments on how well he fits into the mountains, trees, and lakes that he loves so well. This admission allows for his transition to loving father, bonding with Maria through folksongs and the folk dance, the Ländler.

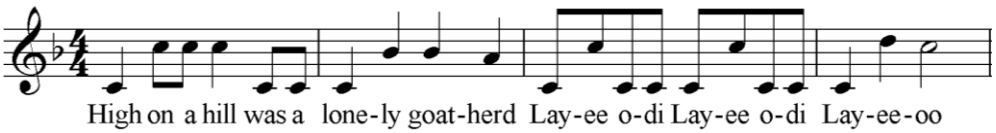
The Ländler, of course, is the most tangible connection to actual Austrian folk music and dance in the musical. Traditionally, the Austrian folk dance is a peasant dance in ¾ time. Known as a "Tachtanz" ("hop dance"), the Ländler often includes hopping and stamping in its steps as well as "interlocking gestures" in the hands and arms.[121] Mosco Carner also notes that hand-clapping accompanies the dance in some regions.[122] Although choreographed specifically for the show, the version danced by Maria and the Captain shares these hallmarks of the actual folk dance. Musically, the melody tends to incorporate wide intervals and arpeggios. Like much dance music, it consists of equal sections eight or sixteen bars each that repeat in order to accommodate the steps. Also, "nearly always in a major key, [it] is markedly diatonic."[123] And

[120]Wilk, 34.
[121]Paul Nettl, *The Story of Dance Music* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1947), 255.
[122]Mosco Carner. "Ländler." *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed July 17, 2013, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/15945.
[123]Carner, "Ländler."

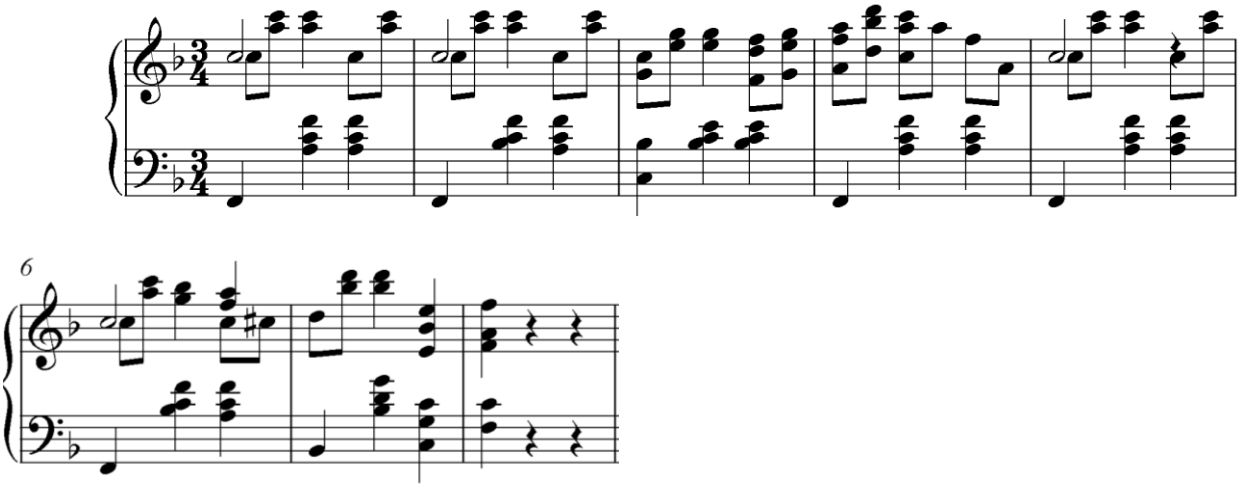
while accordions often play the tunes nowadays, the traditional ensemble includes two violins, a double bass, a clarinet, and cymbals. Significantly the Ländler in *The Sound of Music* is based on the earlier song "The Lonely Goatherd," also associated with rural Austria (Example 3.7). The heart of the piece is an eight-bar section that repeats six times (Example 3.7b). Of course, the orchestra hired by the Captain plays the dance. The group contains more strings than the traditional ensemble and lacks cymbals, presenting a gentrified version of the music.[124] It is important that during this performance – which, unlike "Edelweiss," is actually rooted in Austrian folk – the Captain and Maria begin to realize their feelings for one another.

Example 3.7. *a,* Melody from "The Lonely Goatherd;" *b,* Piano Reduction of a Ländler section.

a



b



[124]Works by composers such as Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and other create a precedent for this.

The Lonely Goatherd
from THE SOUND OF MUSIC
Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II
Music by Richard Rodgers

Laendler
from THE SOUND OF MUSIC
By Richard Rodgers

Captain von Trapp sings "Edelweiss" twice in the film adaptation. The repetition helps to solidify his association with the folk, which the film must work harder to establish with Christopher Plummer than folkie Theo Bikel. As I discussed in the section "The Players," Christopher Plummer cultivated an urbane and sophisticated persona. Therefore, the film needs more to emphasize the Captain's folk roots due to the replacement of a folksinger with a classically trained actor. Rather than saving the song for the Captain's farewell to the country he loves, Wise et al. use the song to introduce his newly rediscovered musicality and affirm his relationship with his country. The first time that the Captain sings occurs at home in a private performance for the children, Maria, the Baroness, and Max. Again, the guitar plays an important role in the appearance of folk authenticity. Georg von Trapp reveals his musical abilities through a performance that visually evokes a naturalness and folk aesthetic. Similar to "Do Re Mi," however, the overall soundscape tells a different story.

The song begins with a simple guitar pattern supporting the melody. Once the voice enters, a lush string accompaniment soon joins. While the simple guitar part gives a quality of

effortlessness, the orchestral background adds a level of artificiality and professionalism. Furthermore, the filmmakers ultimately chose to dub Christopher Plummer's singing. This choice furthers the disconnect between the visuals and the sound of "Edelweiss." The festival performance of the song is a reprise. Captain von Trapp introduces the song by calling it a "love song. [And saying] I know you share this love. I pray that you will never let it die." When he becomes choked with emotion, Maria sings, followed by the children, and then the entire diegetic audience. The Captain has stopped playing the guitar, and the non-diegetic orchestra supports the song with a stirring accompaniment that includes Austrian cow bells.

The discourse of music as natural is reinforced by Liesl's role in "Edelweiss" and her ability to play the guitar. While all of the children learn to sing beautifully with tight harmonies under Maria's tutelage, Liesl, as the eldest, most obviously takes up the mantle of folksinger. She joins her father in singing "Edelweiss," apparently remembering the song and even the harmonies from before her mother's death. Although it has been many years since music graced the von Trapp household, "Edelweiss" has remained ingrained in Liesl. The simplicity of the song allows for her impromptu performance. Liesl is also the only other character besides her father and Maria to play the guitar. She accompanies the children singing "The Sound of Music," presumably having learned rudimentary guitar playing skills from Maria. Liesl's ability to play guitar supports the idea that music can be learned and performed by everyone and is a natural part of life.

Despite the appearance of authenticity and natural music-making, the film contains an opposition between amateur music-making and professionalism. As I have just explored, this tension occurs in the disconnect between the apparent visual and aural cues and the overall soundscape. Similarly, Julie Andrews's clear, strong, wide-ranging voice and crisp diction is

plainly that of a professional singer. Furthermore, the tension between amateurism and professionalism plays out within the plot itself. Despite (or perhaps due to) Maria's homespun teaching methods, the von Trapp children quickly reach a high level of musicality. Max Detweiler recognizes the potential of the children as a professional singing group and wants to feature them in the Salzburg music festival. Captain von Trapp, however, strongly objects to his children singing in public. While Maria has no such qualms, she defers to her husband. Tellingly, the Captain's acceptance of the family's participation in the festival provides a means for their escape. As the symbol of folk, the Captain's ultimate approval and use of singing in a public forum justifies the practice. Likewise, the message of authenticity imparted throughout the film serves to legitimize professional musicians as just as natural as amateurs. The film thus elevates the professional status of both the onscreen performers and the real-life von Trapp family as authentic musicians.

Conclusion: Legacy

Film has an advantage over stage as it is widely accessible and often long-lasting; and unlike their Broadway counterparts, film musicals offer audiences a fixed product which can be returned to again and again. These factors help to explain why film musicals are often more well-known than stage musicals. The sustained popularity of the film *The Sound of Music* certainly speaks to the above conclusion. While Stacy Wolf contends that both Mary Martin and Julie Andrews created iconic versions of Maria von Trapp, the average viewer easily connects the role with Andrews while perhaps remaining entirely unaware of Martin's sparkling but ephemeral performance. Similarly, it is the image of Julie Andrews on her mountaintop that adorns popular coffee table books on the musical and other cultural artifacts (Figure 3.4). *The Sound of Music* is not only (easily) the most popular film musical from the 1960s but of all time, having grossed

$286,214,286 worldwide. Not only do the box office numbers suggest repeated viewings during the film's initial run, but its annual television showing during Christmas, availability on DVD and other forms of home-viewing (especially anniversary editions containing special features) allow fans to become intimately familiar with their favorite musical.

Figure 3.4. Julie Andrews on Mountaintop. Screen Capture.

There are several indicators for the film's ongoing popularity. According to the Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization's web page, the film has consistently charted well on Fox Video internal charts and the Nielson VideoScan sales charts since it was first issued in 1979.[125] The film has also been reissued frequently in subsequent years, including special edition DVDs and Blu-ray discs in recent years that contain documentaries and interviews with various cast and crew members. As mentioned above, the film has enjoyed regular television broadcasts for many years; NBC showed *The Sound of Music* annually for twenty years, and ABC now broadcasts it during the Christmas season. "Sing-a-long-a-*Sound of Music*" is a popular cult phenomenon that has had successful runs in New York, at the Hollywood Bowl, and across the country since 2000. Audience members dress in costume and join in singing for a participatory film experience similar to the *Rocky Horror* phenomenon.

[125] http://www.rnh.com/show/95/The-Sound-of-Music#history-932. Accessed June 20, 2013.

After the overwhelming achievement of *The Sound of Music*, studios rushed to cash in on similar endeavors, including *Camelot* (1967), *Funny Girl* (1968), *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (1968), and *Hello, Dolly!* (1969). Most of the musicals in the late sixties had a roadshow presentation; all of them either boasted of an excessively large budget or enjoyed a successful theatrical run – and in rare cases, both. The next chapter will deal with two infamous musicals from this period, *Camelot* (1967) and *Paint Your Wagon* (1969). Neither of these films did as poorly as the flops *Doctor Dolittle* (1967), *Star!* (1968), and *Sweet Charity* (1969), which all grossed under $10 million, significantly less than their high budgets. Roadshow musicals continued to be popular with audiences (e.g. 1968's *Funny Girl*) but Peter Krämer notes that the format became a "victim of its own success."[126] Studios produced more films than could survive within the "event" presentation, effectively giving audiences too many choices. The musical, particularly as it existed in the roadshow format, seemed to be a dying genre. Langford claims that *The Sound of Music*'s "long-term significance was that, however unwittingly, it almost helped destroy Hollywood."[127] This and other similar opinions blame the copycat trend for the near downfall of the film industry.

Although *The Sound of Music* itself saved Fox studios, the flops named above and the huge influx of large-scale musicals hurt the studios. Certainly, overproduction became a problem. Though as Hall and Neale more gently state the situation, the attempts to replicate Fox's resounding success marked "the start of a temporary hiatus in the regular production of big-budget films of all kinds."[128] Yet, as we will see, musicals remained a significant part of the landscape into the seventies. Contrary to Langford's assertion, the actual long-term significance

[126]Krämer, 43.
[127]Langford, 105.
[128]Hall and Neale, 186.

of *The Sound of Music* is not that it nearly destroyed Hollywood. In fact, that seems a rather short-sighted view in that the film negatively impacted the industry in the late sixtiess due to copycats but recovered through New Hollywood and beyond. Instead, the film's significance clearly lies in its longevity and its ability to maintain status as an incredibly beloved film.

Furthermore, the enormous familiarity of the film version has helped to shape subsequent stage versions. The Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization includes additional rental materials for the songs "I Have Confidence" and "Something Good." And indeed, the 1998 Broadway revival added the former and replaced "Ordinary Couple" with the latter. Moreover, the revival also emulated the film in having the children sing "My Favorite Things" with Maria rather than the Mother Abbess and moving "The Lonely Goatherd" to a later spot in the show. This influence indicates the expectations set up by the film for theater audiences.

Furthermore, *The Sound of Music* has kept Maria von Trapp and the Trapp Family Singers in the cultural memory of America when they might have faded into obscurity. The group gave successful musical tours throughout Europe and the United States which gained them popularity in their own right. While Maria's memoir and the subsequent films secured a place in history for the enterprising Austrian family, it was specifically the film version of *The Sound of Music* that launched the von Trapps to worldwide fame. Their story – if only a fictionalized version – remains a familiar one. And as the real Maria herself later noted, it has positively impacted many lives, so much so that it "made [her] fold [her] hands and say from the bottom of [her] heart, "Dear Lord, thank You for the *Sound of Music*."[129]

Finally, *The Sound of Music* has had a lasting importance for the place of film musicals in American culture. Of course, it has continued to garner multiple references in popular culture.

[129]Von Trapp, 173.

Since the mid-sixties, references to the film have occurred in numerous television shows, including *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *The Muppet Show*, *The Golden Girls*, *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, *Seinfeld*, *Cheers*, *Home Improvement*, *Mad About You*, *The Nanny*, *Friends*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Everybody Loves Raymond*, *Will & Grace*, *Family Guy*, *Frasier*, *House M.D.*, *Gilmore Girls*, *The Suite Life of Zack and Cody*, *Gossip Girl*, *Desperate Housewives*, *Mad Men*, *The Big Bang Theory*, and *Parks and Recreation*. I list so many shows – still just a sampling of those that mention *The Sound of Music*, not to mention all of the films – in order to demonstrate that the film remains a mainstay of pop culture as well as the variety of show types and demographics. This list includes sit-coms and dramas targeted towards children, teens, and adults. The references themselves range from a passing comment that assumes familiarity to performances and parodies of the well-known songs. As Wolf notes, "in mainstream culture, 'Julie Andrews' invokes sweetness and light, innocence and virginal freshness" that draws on her governess persona.[130] Wolf explores the use of Andrews as a trope in shows such as *Ally McBeal* and *Ellen*, teasing out the lesbian meanings. *Will & Grace* also exploits the perceived connection of musicals, and *The Sound of Music* in particular, with the gay community. The sit-com included an entire episode based on the traveling sing-a-long version. *Family Guy* often reveals Seth MacFarlane's knowledge and affection for musicals, and *The Sound of Music* is no exception. Among other less prominent allusions, the main characters sing "So Long, Farewell," "Sixteen Going on Seventeen," and "I Have Confidence" in various episodes. The pervasiveness of the film belies the oft-repeated lamentation that musicals are dead and instead suggests that they lie at the foundation of American popular culture.

[130]Wolf, *Problem Like Maria*, 209.

At the same time, *The Sound of Music* is very much a product of its time. As I have explored in this chapter, the film modifies elements from its source in significant ways, reflecting the era. In particular, it intersects with second-wave feminism and the American folk revival movement. Unlike the original and subsequent stage productions, the filmmakers' choices and actors' performances in the film version of *The Sound of Music* remain fixed. Therefore, its connection with prominent issues and movements of its time remain important to consider. While the context and audiences for the film may change over time, the relationship between the film adaptation and its historical context endures as a key element in understanding the film. Under the surface, *The Sound of Music* resonates with contemporary concerns and therefore, connected with sixties audiences.

CHAPTER 4 – The End of an Era? *Camelot* (1967) and *Paint Your Wagon* (1969)

Introduction

After *The Sound of Music*, studios attempted to make money on similar ventures while coping with changing audiences. Film adaptations of *Camelot* (1967) and *Paint Your Wagon* (1969), two musicals by Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe, represent the tensions that spring up in the midst of a turbulent period in Hollywood and America's social history. While *The Sound of Music* clearly catered to a family audience, the two films discussed in this chapter do not seem to lock in to a single audience. Through format, content, and casting, these films pull at different fragments of the American audience. Furthermore, these and other issues can be seen as indicators of this short but key time period. Following a similar structure as in the previous chapters, I explore the adaptations of *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* in relation to New Hollywood, feminism, and the so-called sexual revolution. My analysis also explores how these films adhere to certain traditions that had grown up around the musical. Thus, *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* illustrate a tension between old and new, tradition and innovation.

The years 1967-1969 proved to be a tumultuous time in the United States of America. Thomas Elsaesser observes that this period saw "the most violent social and political upheavals the United States had experienced for at least a generation."[1] As war in Vietnam continued to rage on, television footage shook people's support of the conflict and antiwar protests sprang up all over the country. The peaceful appeal for racial equality made by Martin Luther King, Jr. increasingly gave way to more militant bids as the decade wore on, particularly with the

[1]Thomas Elsaesser, "American auteur cinema: the last - or first - great picture show," in *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser, Alexander Horwath and Noel King (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), 37.

shocking assassination of King himself in 1968. In fact, Barry Langford notes that 1968 was a "year in which America appeared almost to be coming apart."[2] Not only was Civil Rights leader King killed in April of that year, but JFK's younger brother Robert was shot and killed just two months later. Furthermore, second-wave feminism was in full swing as a movement concerned with issues such as women's rights in the workplace and over their bodies. In June 1969, the Stonewall riots marked the beginnings of the gay liberation movement. Connected with both of these movements in some ways was the so-called sexual revolution, which advocated alternative relationships, sexual freedom, and experimentation. In light of all of these changes, antiestablishment attitudes and counterculture became the trends of the day.

While the American people were dealing with political and social turmoil, Hollywood continued to cope with the industry instability that marked the entire decade. Despite studio efforts and a few major moneymakers, such as *The Sound of Music* (1965), audience attendance persisted in dropping. Langford notes the unfortunate landmark in 1966 as "annual audiences would dip for the first time below the symbolically important 1 billion mark."[3] Along with the major drop, Timothy Corrigan explores the changing conception of an audience that was becoming increasingly "uncertain and fragmented."[4] Mark Wheeler at least in part attributes this perpetual decline to the aging and out-of-touch leaders of the major studios.[5] Thus, the acquisition of the studios by major corporations such as Gulf and Western Industries and Transamerica helped to "increase stability and minimize risks" as well as "maximize profits."[6]

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[2]Barry Langford, *Post-Classical Hollywood: Film Industry Style and Ideology Since 1945* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 157.

[3]Ibid., 109.

[4]Timothy Corrigan, *A Cinema without Walls: Movies and Culture after Vietnam* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1991), 21.

[5]Mark Wheeler, *Hollywood Politics and Society* (London: BFI Publishing, 2006).

[6]Geoff King, *New Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 68.

The corporations also brought in new, younger executives to breathe life into the antiquated studios.

Perhaps one of the most significant industrial changes was the final demise of the Production Code. In 1966, Jack Valenti was appointed the new head of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA). He immediately made changes to the Code that "effectively stripped it of any meaningful authority."[7] A few films with adult content, including *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1966), received exemptions from Code restrictions and simply provided a warning that only mature audiences should attend rather than altering the content.[8] Langford observes that by 1967 new types of films, famously *The Graduate* and *Bonnie and Clyde*, "all enthusiastically exploited the end of the Production Code by portraying sexuality (including homosexuality, partner-swapping, prostitution, sexual relations between generations and abortion) and criminal violence in unprecedentedly graphic ways."[9] In 1968 Valenti replaced the Code entirely with a ratings system, which consisted of G (general audiences), M (mature audiences), R (restricted audiences, under sixteen must be accompanied by a parent), and X (audiences over sixteen only).

As with every era, films responded to these changes in various ways. The so-called New Hollywood broke from formulas typical to the studio era in terms of genre, style, and content. Revisionist films deconstructed classical genres (the western being the standard example) even as newer generic forms were being explored. New Hollywood directors employed stylistic techniques associated with European art film, specifically the French New Wave, including jump

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[7]Langford, 113.

[8]Peter Krämer, *The New Hollywood: From Bonnie and Clyde to Star Wars* (London: Wallflower, 2005), 48.

[9]Langord, 115. Do note, however, that *Bonnie and Clyde* itself actually removed references to homosexuality. Mark Harris states that "the reality [was] that a homosexual or bisexual protagonist in a Hollywood movie was then unthinkable, and the makers of *Bonnie and Clyde* knew it." Mark Harris, *Pictures at a Revolution: Five Movies and the Birth of the New Hollywood* (New York: Penguin Press, 2008), 208.

cuts, rapid editing, and other devices that steered away from classical Hollywood continuity editing. The subject matter of early New Hollywood films includes themes of youthful alienation and rebellion and address various issues surrounding gender and counterculture. As mentioned above, films from the late sixties also tend to embrace sex and violence as a response to changing social conditions as well as the dissolution of the Production Code.

Scholars consistently cite *The Graduate*, *Bonnie and Clyde,* and *Easy Rider* (1969) as indicative of the brief but powerful period of experimentation from 1967-69. *The Graduate* famously follows recent college graduate Benjamin Braddock as he flounders through the start of his adult life, has an illicit affair with the older Mrs. Robinson, and woos her daughter Elaine. Langford analyzes the sequence that intercuts Ben lounging in the pool with scenes from his sexual encounters with Mrs. Robinson, and the author considers montages such as this to signal the start of Hollywood stylistic experimentation.[10] Ben's alienation and seduction reflect the time. Despite the incredible popularity of *The Graduate*, scholars such as Jonathan Rosenbaum actually judge *Bonnie and Clyde* to be more stylistically influential. Rosenbaum contends that the film about the criminal duo "most decisively converted certain attitudes and stylistic devices of the French New Wave into a lasting part of the American mainstream."[11] Furthermore, the frank treatment of sex and graphic depictions of violence helped to usher in the new era. The rebellious characters in *Easy Rider* solidified the "evocations of freedom" presented in the earlier films, depicting a counterculture that, like Bonnie and Clyde, is ultimately shot down.[12]

[10]Langford, 133-34.

[11]Jonathan Rosenbaum, "New Hollywood and the Sixties Melting Pot," in *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser, Alexander Horwath and Noel King (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), 141.

[12]King, 18.

These films also indicate a difference in gender depictions in New Hollywood. J. Hoberman observes a new type of female representation in Bonnie's characterization in *Bonnie and Clyde*. With her readily apparent sexual appetite and propensity for violence, Bonnie "broke the prison of gender" in a meaningful way.[13] Yet many films of the period, including *The Graduate* and *Easy Rider*, have a decidedly masculine emphasis. While roadshows and family-oriented films were aimed at a primarily female audience, the explicit depictions of sex and violence in New Hollywood films shifted the target to a principally young, and disaffected male audience. *Easy Rider*, in particular, indicates an interest in "buddy" films that would carry on into the 1970s. These films marginalized women and might be seen in part as a reaction to second-wave feminism. Robin Wood further posits that the lack of home (and therefore, marriage and the nuclear family) also suggests the "repressed bisexuality that lurked (always ambiguously) in seventies Hollywood cinema."[14] Gender roles became less well defined, and films handled the ambiguity in various ways.

So how do musicals figure into this fluid and complex landscape of American cinema in the late sixties? The ever-present and long popular genre strove to remain viable and relevant largely by attempting to piggyback on the seemingly successful big-budget roadshow format. After the undeniable success of *The Sound of Music*, studios began producing similar films. This influx of lengthy musical films complete with Overture and Intermission included: *Camelot* and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (1967); *Finian's Rainbow*, *Doctor Doolittle*, *Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang*, *Star!*, *Funny Girl*, and *Oliver!* (1968); and *Hello, Dolly!*, *Paint Your Wagon*, and *Sweet Charity* (1969). The Barbra Streisand vehicle *Funny Girl*, chronicling

[13]J. Hoberman, *The Dream Life: Movies, Media, and the Mythology of the Sixties* (New York: New Press, 2003), 175.

[14]Robin Wood, *Hollywood from Vietnam to Reagan…and Beyond* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 199.

comedienne Fanny Brice's rise to fame and romance with Nick Arnstein, proved that musicals could still be a hit as the top-grossing film of its year with $58,500,000. Yet Roger Ebert pointed towards faults that were being leveled at these films as a whole, calling *Funny Girl* the "ultimate example of the roadshow musical gone overboard. It is over-produced, over-photographed and over-long" despite Streisand's stellar performance.[15] Ebert's criticisms continue to resound in film and musical theater literature.

Despite the continued popularity of roadshow films, the format did become, as Peter Krämer puts it, a "victim of its own success."[16] Studios produced more films than could survive within the "event" presentation, effectively giving audiences too many choices. For every hit or mild success were flops (e.g. *Doctor Dolitte* made nine million and *Sweet Charity* only eight). A brief survey of the content of the film musicals produced from 1967-69 illustrates the myriad ways that filmmakers attempted to find a niche for the genre. *The Sound of Music* and other musicals (for example, the 1964 Disney original *Mary Poppins*) indicated family as a perceived audience for musicals. Written for film, *Doctor Dolittle* and *Chitty Chitty* especially exemplify a focus on children as the primary viewers. Other musicals, namely *Finian's Rainbow*, *Oh! What a Lovely War*, and *Sweet Charity*, addressed topical social and political issues such as racism, the absurdity of war, and gender relations respectively.

The Shows

Paint Your Wagon opened November 12, 1951 at the Shubert Theatre. A musical comedy about gold miners in 1850s California, the stage production featured James Barton as miner Ben Rumson, Tony Bavaar as the Mexican miner Julio Valveras, and Olga San Juan as Jennifer Rumson, Ben's daughter and Julio's love. The production received decent critical notices from

[15]Roger Ebert, "Funny Girl," *Chicago Sun-Times*, Oct. 18, 1968.
[16]Krämer, 43.

reviewers, with Brooks Atkinson calling the score "superb" and the musical as a whole "heartily enjoyable" while identifying problems with the second act.[17] The show received no Tony nominations, however, and ran for only 289 performances. *Camelot* opened at the Majestic Theatre on December 3, 1960. Based on T.H. White's version of Arthurian legend *The Once and Future King*, the Broadway production starred Richard Burton as King Arthur, Julie Andrews as Guenevere, and Robert Goulet as Lancelot. The show received mixed critical reactions. For example, Harold Taubman praises many aspects of the show but laments that "unfortunately, *Camelot* is weighed down by the burden of its book. The storytelling is inconsistent."[18] At first, the audience seemed to agree as the show had lukewarm attendance. However, the show's attendance was notoriously boosted by a performance of several songs by the cast on *The Ed Sullivan Show*.[19] The musical went on to win four Tony Awards, including Best Actor in a Musical for Richard Burton, and ran for 873 performances.[20]

Both musicals were products of the renowned team Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe. Among their collaborations were the stage works *Brigadoon* (1947), *Paint Your Wagon* (1951), *My Fair Lady* (1956), and *Camelot* (1960) – all four of which were adapted for film – and the film musical *Gigi* (1958). While several of their other works are well-respected, much of their reputation rests on *My Fair Lady* as a highly successful adaptation of George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* (1912). While Lerner drew heavily from Shaw's original and the 1938 film of the play, Joseph Swain and Geoffrey Block consider the complex integration of the songs as

[17]Brooks Atkinson, "SWELL FOLKS: 'Top Banana' and 'Paint Your Wagon' Are Acted by Some Vivid Performers Burlesque Buffoons James Barton," *New York Times*, November 18, 1951.

[18]Harold Taubman, "'Camelot' Partly Enchanted: Lerner-Loewe Musical Opens at Majestic," *New York Times*, December 5, 1950.

[19]See Ethan Mordden, *Open a New Window The Broadway Musical in the 1960s* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 28 for more on this anecdote.

[20]For further discussion of the development and production of *Camelot*, see both Ethan Mordden, *Open a New Window: The Broadway Musical in the 1960s*, 23-33, and Scott Miller, *Deconstructing Harold Hill: An Insider's Guide to Musical Theatre* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000), 1-23.

highly sophisticated.[21] Scholars posit that Loewe's music is able to reveal character and even transform them from Shaw's conception. Raymond Knapp observes that it is "rare for a highly regarded play to become a similarly highly regarded musical."[22] He attributes *My Fair Lady*'s accomplishment of this endeavor to Lerner and Loewe's "adding music to the play in a particularly strategic way" that steered Shaw's tale towards a version of the Cinderella story.[23] The stage version of *My Fair Lady* was critically acclaimed and enormously popular, running for 2,717 performances on Broadway. The 1964 film adaptation starring Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison also did very well, grossing seventy-two million and winning eight Academy Awards including Best Picture. The stage version of *Camelot* (1960) already invited comparison with the quickly beloved *My Fair Lady* and often came up short. Similarly, *Paint Your Wagon* had not been as well-received as the whimsical *Brigadoon*. Author Gene Lees cites problems in Lerner's librettos for *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* as a primary reason why *My Fair Lady* works better, claiming that Lerner's lyric writing skills topped his book writing. In particular, he notes that even *Paint Your Wagon*'s original script was "structured poorly."[24]

[21]See Joseph Swain, *The Broadway Musical: A Critical and Musical Survey* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2002) 193-220 and Geoffrey Block, *Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from Showboat to Sondheim and Lloyd Webber*, 2nd Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 260-78.

[22]Raymond Knapp, *The American Musical and the Performance of Personal Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 284.

[23]Ibid., 85.

[24]Gene Lees, *Inventing Champagne: The Worlds of Lerner and Loewe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 255.

The Films:

Camelot and *Paint Your Wagon*, two of the least respected films of the period, are generally considered flops. Richard Jameson lumps *Paint Your Wagon* together with *Star!* as "box office debacles (and lousy movies)."[25] However, *Star!*, a true flop, grossed only four million while *Paint Your Wagon* grossed $31,678,778. Similarly, Christie Milliken degrades the film along with *Sweet Charity* as "light fare" that bombed at the box office despite the same discrepancy in numbers.[26] In fact, *Paint Your Wagon* did fairly well that year, placing in the top ten of highest grossing films of 1969. Of course, it did nowhere near as well as *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, which amassed a gross of more than one hundred million. But no other film that year came even close to making that kind of money. In the same vein, *Camelot* grossed $31,102,578 just two years earlier – not amazing, but not abysmal all things considered. Rather than being catastrophic failures, these two films were in the middle of the pack at the time of their release.

However, the moderate success did not justify the exorbitant amount of money spent on these films. *Camelot* cost an estimated thirteen million while *Paint Your Wagon's* expenses came to a whopping twenty million. As Krämer suggests, *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* were in part victims of overproduction. With so much competition, big-budget "event" musicals could no longer recoup the money poured into production in the same way as films such as *The Sound of Music* did. It is thus perhaps more correct, though less sensational, to simply designate these two films as decidedly not hits.

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[25]Richard T. Jameson, "Dinosaurs in the Age of the Cinemobile," in *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser, Alexander Horwath and Noel King (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), 155.

[26]Christie Milliken, "1969: Movies and the Counterculture," in *American Cinema of the 1960s: Themes and Variations*, ed. Barry Keith Grant (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 220.

Another element of popular success – namely the selling of albums – deals with the score. The original cast album of *Camelot* sold extremely well. The album spent six weeks in the #1 spot on Billboard's top-selling albums.[27] *Camelot* reached Gold status and sold nearly one million copies. Thus, many American homes had a familiarity with the score and original cast, which created a buzz around the film. The film soundtrack did not reach the heights of the Broadway album, but it did respectably well. It peaked at #11 on the Billboard weekly album charts, where it remained for four weeks. The score also won an Academy Award for Best Music/Score Adaptation. *Paint Your Wagon*'s recording history has a more unusual trajectory. The original cast album, produced by RCA Victor, did not have *Camelot*'s success. However, the song "They Call the Wind Maria" has been covered by a number of artists through the years. In 1959 the Kingston Trio recorded this tune, and it reached #2 on the pop charts. John Bush Jones notes that because of this success "during the folksinging craze of the later 1950s countless Americans thought 'They Call the Wind Maria' was a folk song, not a show tune!"[28] The film soundtrack made the Billboard 200 but never broke 100 in the United States. It reached #4, however, in the United Kingdom. Even more surprising, non-singer Lee Marvin's rendition of "Wan'drin' Star" spent three weeks in the #1 position, outselling The Beatles' "Let It Be."

While popular reception of these films might be described as lukewarm, critical reception leaned more distinctly towards the negative. *Camelot* especially was panned by the major newspapers with only Vanessa Redgrave's performance garnering any praise. Bosley Crowther of the *New York Times* laments that the problematic aspects of the stage version were not

[27]All Billboard chart numbers come from Joel Whitburn, *The Billboard Book of Top 40 Hits*, 8th ed. (New York: Billboard Books, 2004) and David McAleer, *The All Music Book of Hit Singles* (San Francisco: Miller Freeman, 1996).

[28]John Bush Jones, *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre* (Lebanon, New Hampshire: Brandeis University Press, 2003), 169.

corrected but emphasized in the film adaptation. And *Los Angeles Times* critic Charlie Champlin gives a laundry list of the film's deficiencies:

> A slow static pace, a lack of style, the pinched and artificial quality of the proceedings, the jumpy and inconsistent cuts, the incessant overuse of close-ups, the failure to sustain emotional momentum, the fatal wavering between reality and fantasy, the inability to exploit the resources of the film medium.[29]

In fact, most of these criticisms come up in both the critical reactions of the time and later scholarly discussions. Therefore, my analysis will address several of these aspects of the film in order to understand, if not justify, these choices. *Paint Your Wagon* by no means received glowing reviews. For instance, Champlin obviously hated the film as much or more than the previous Lerner and Loewe adaptation, calling it a "gross, warped and towering shout of an image."[30] Yet oddly enough, the film generally seems to be considered less offending than the stagey *Camelot*. Vincent Canby of the *New York Times* sums up the feeling with the statement that *Paint Your Wagon* is "amiable," yet this pleasant rather innocuous aura is the film's own undoing.[31] Similarly, Gene Lees quotes an uncited source that called *Paint Your Wagon* "bland, directionless."[32] Not a major Lerner and Loewe work anyway, the film seemed more forgettable under the still subpar direction of Joshua Logan.

The Players:

Camelot and *Paint Your Wagon* have more in common than their Lerner and Loewe collaboration, dubious reception, and legacy as death knells of the American film musical. Lerner penned both screenplays and remained actively involved in the filmmaking process of

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[29] Charlie Champlin, "*Camelot* Opens at Cinerama Dome," *Los Angeles Times*, November 3, 1967.

[30]Charlie Champlin, "'Your Wagon' On Trail of Gold Rush: *Paint Your Wagon* is Highly Forgettable," *Los Angeles Times*, October 23, 1969.

[31]Vincent Canby, "Screen: Amiable *Paint Your Wagon*, Lerner-Loewe Musical Adapted to Film," *New York Times*, October 16, 1969.

[32]Lees, 261.

both adaptations. Furthermore, stage and screen veteran Joshua Logan directed both films. Perhaps Logan said it best himself in the opening of his autobiography *Josh: My Up and Down, In and Out Life*, "My life and breath is the theatre. I seem to visualize all existence in theatrical terms."[33] By the late sixties, he had thirty theater credits as a director. In 1949, he directed *South Pacific*, which he had co-written with Oscar Hammerstein II, to great acclaim. He received the Tony Award for Best Director as well as sharing the Pulitzer Prize with Rodgers and Hammerstein. In the mid-fifties, he directed several films including the successful *Picnic* (1955) and *Sayonara* (1957) and received Academy Award nominations for both films. Therefore, he brought recently acquired film experience to his direction of the film version of *South Pacific* (1958). However, the use of rather garish color filters has been a constant source of criticism for Logan and the film. Logan later wrote that he wanted the color changes to be more subtle in order to create a similar atmosphere as the lighting changes in the stage production. He hated the outcome, referring to it as "one of the major mistakes of my career."[34]

Logan notes that Lerner and Loewe nevertheless tapped him to direct *Camelot* because they felt that the earlier adaptation had "flair and imagination."[35] Logan writes about both of his Lerner and Loewe adaptations in *Movies Stars, Real People, and Me*. Despite the negative reaction to *Camelot*, Logan considers it "the most beautiful picture I ever made."[36] He does not have as many nice things to say about *Paint Your Wagon*, claiming that Lerner abused his power as producer, interfering both during shooting and in creating the final cut. Scholars point to Logan's theatrical talent as a hindrance to his film direction, particularly of musical adaptations. Gene Lees asserts that Logan was "really at his best in theater, not film" and he did not know

[33]Joshua Logan, *Josh: My Up and Down, In and Out Life* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1976), 1.
[34]Joshua Logan, *Movie Stars, Real People, and Me* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1978), 123.
[35]Ibid., 139.
[36]Ibid., 210.

"enough to realize that you should not necessarily use its [film's] devices, and certainly not overuse them. He did."[37] Certainly, Logan cannot be blamed for all of the problems with *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon*. Yet his decisions and theatrical perspective marked each film in different ways.

Unlike in previous decades, *Camelot*'s filmmakers chose stars based on considerations other than established musical or dance ability yet did not simply dub the actors out of hand. While not Broadway veterans or well-known singers, Vanessa Redgrave and Richard Harris both have pleasant albeit rather thin and untrained singing voices. Significantly, both Redgrave and Harris had acclaimed stage and film credits from which they would eventually build highly successful and enduring careers. Redgrave had appeared in various Shakespeare productions, including the Royal Shakespeare Company's *As You Like It*. In 1966, she created the title character in a London production of *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*. At the time of *Camelot*'s filming, Redgrave's film credits included the 1966 films *Morgan: A Suitable Case for Treatment* in a performance which earned the actress her first Academy Award nomination and Michelangelo Antonioni's *Blowup*. Thus, the actress had already garnered a reputation for serious acting abilities. Irish actor Richard Harris also began his career on the English stage. He began appearing in films in the late fifties and received an Academy Award nomination for his leading role in *This Sporting Life* (1963). Italian actor Franco Nero came from a quite different background than his two co-stars. Before *Camelot*, Nero had been in Italian films almost exclusively. He was known largely for his roles in spaghetti westerns from the mid-sixties, including the eponymous character in Sergio Corbucci's *Django* (1966).

[37]Lees, 250.

In interviews accompanying a television broadcast of the film's premiere, Harris and director Joshua Logan discuss casting for *Camelot*.[38] While Logan gushed that he could not imagine anyone but Harris as Arthur, Harris describes how he aggressively pursued the role. He felt a personal affinity for King Arthur and sent dozens of messages to Logan until he was granted an audition. Logan claimed that Nero had actually learned English in order to play Lancelot. Whether or not this was strictly true, Nero certainly had a rather limited command of the language. Finally, Logan stated that the character of Guenevere needed talent as well as both "sensuous" and "queenly" qualities. For the director, Redgrave's combination of sexuality and elegance made her "worth losing a kingdom for."[39]

Star text plays an interesting role in *Paint Your Wagon* in terms of musical ability and genre. Publicity leading up to the premiere noted the fact that none of the principal characters were singers. Journalist Norma Lee Browning stated that "it's not every day you sign three nonmusical talents for leading roles in one of the highest-budgeted musicals" but seems remarkably unconcerned with the fact.[40] Logan did, however, cast classically trained singer Harve Presnell in the minor role Rotten Luck Willie to sing the already popular song "They Call the Wind the Maria." Presnell made his film debut as Johnny Brown, a role which he created on Broadway, in Meredith Willson's *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*. He sings the song beautifully, and critics responded well to his contribution to the film. Although as Gene Lees later put it, it was these "moments of excellence that illuminate the mediocrity of the rest of it."[41] Ray Walston played another minor character, Mad Jack Duncan. Walston was a familiar face in film musicals

[38]Richard Harris, et al., "*Camelot* World Premiere," special features. *Camelot*. DVD. Directed by Joshua Logan (Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 1998).

[39]Harris, et al., "*Camelot* World Premiere."

[40]Norma Lee Browning, "On the Wilderness Trail with *Paint Your Wagon*," *Chicago Tribune*, February 16, 1969.

[41]Lees, 256.

as Luther Billis in *South Pacific* (1958) and *Damn Yankees* (1958). Jean Seberg played the polygamous Elizabeth. Seberg brought a European film pedigree to *Paint Your Wagon*. Although her career began somewhat unsuccessfully in Hollywood, the actress had since made a name for herself in French films, including Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless* (1960). However, Seberg was not a singer and her one song was dubbed by Anita Gordon.

Paint Your Wagon drew on genre conventions not of the musical but the western through the casting of its two lead roles. Lee Marvin was an extremely well-known actor "identified with roles of violence and sadism" and especially for his roles in westerns.[42] Among numerous other parts, he played the title character in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962) opposite John Wayne and Jimmy Stewart. His fame had further risen after winning the Academy Award for Best Actor for his performance in *Cat Ballou* (1965). Marvin was also known for being difficult to work with and drinking heavily, characteristics that followed the publicity for *Paint Your Wagon*. Newspapers reported rumors of intense fighting between Marvin and director Joshua Logan during filming.[43] Despite the fact that he was not a singer, as mentioned earlier, Marvin's recording of "Wand'rin'Star" was a hit in the United Kingdom.

Like his co-star, Clint Eastwood also conjured associations related to the western. He starred in the television western *Rawhide* through 1966. By 1969, Eastwood had risen to international stardom through Sergio Leone's spaghetti western trilogy *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964), *For a Few Dollars More* (1965), and *The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly* (1966). All three of these films had U.S. premieres in 1967. Eastwood thus became known as an antihero with a "laconic and even animal aura."[44] Interestingly, Dennis Bingham notes that "in the years when

[42]Browning, "On the Wilderness Trail."
[43]Ibid.
[44]Paul Smith, *Clint Eastwood: A Cultural Production* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 12.

the Man With No Name and *Dirty Harry* films were popular, Eastwood's private life was seldom publicized… It was as if the film persona of the lone, omnipotent male would be ruptured by glimpses of Eastwood relaxing in his living room or playing with a child."[45] As someone so identified with the western in the late sixties, Eastwood's very presence in the film contributed greatly to the genre mixing in *Paint Your Wagon*. He was also cast against type as a gentle farmer who ultimately desires the moral strictures of society. Although not known as a singer, Eastwood has an agreeable voice, and many critics were pleasantly surprised. Gene Lees describes the actor's singing aptly when he observes that while Eastwood's "soft nightclub voice has a small range and grows thin when he is pushed to the top of it, he understands what a song is about."[46] Of both Eastwood and Marvin, Kelly Kessler says that they "reflect variations on a form of contemporary masculinity that rejects the fifties ideals of marriage, white collar work, and family."[47] Thus, the two actors brought star texts developed in westerns to bear on the film.

Tradition vs. Innovation

These two films represent an awkward hybrid of tradition and innovation. My analysis seeks to uncover how *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* reach into the musical's past while trying to connect with the present. Both films conformed to the standard conception and presentation of musicals since the 1950s, namely the roadshow format. Since *South Pacific* was also a roadshow musical, Logan would have been quite familiar with this mode of presentation. As mentioned before, roadshow films were designed as events. Tickets were pre-sold and souvenir programs were sold at the select showings in limited theaters. Like other roadshow films, *Camelot* and

[45]Dennis Bingham, "Men with No Names: Clint Eastwood's 'The Stranger' Persona, Identification, and the Impenetrable Gaze," *Journal of Film and Video* 42: 4 Stars and the Star System (Winter 1990), 33.

[46]Lees, 256.

[47]Kelly Kessler, *Destabilizing the Hollywood Musical: Music, Masculinity, and Mayhem* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 100.

Paint Your Wagon began with an Overture and were structured into two halves that correspond with Acts in the theatrical versions. An Intermission broke up the two sections of each film.[48] The films are also lengthy; *Camelot* runs 180 minutes and *Paint Your Wagon* runs 166 minutes. In this basic configuration, they seek to emulate what was by now common practice for the musical and had proven highly successful in recent years. On the other hand, the two films interact with changing social and industrial conventions. Despite their commonalities, these two Lerner and Loewe musicals deal with their milieu in very different ways. In this section, I explore how *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* negotiate the complicated relationship between their generic past with a certain consciousness of the present. Several areas highlight the perspectives or approaches of the two films. These areas include fidelity to the original script, approach to the music, content of the film, approach to genre, and cinematic style.

Camelot and *Paint Your Wagon* handle the problem of fidelity, which haunts all adaptations, in distinct ways. As my earlier case studies have illustrated, makers of film versions of stage musicals must decide which elements from the original to retain. Filmmakers make choices in terms of plot structure, dialogue, music, and even other aspects such as choreography or costuming. The ways in which *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* variously handle faithfulness to the plot and music reveal the attitudes towards tradition versus innovation. As discussed in previous chapters, Geoffrey Block identifies two approaches to musical adaptation: one that made films "unrecognizable vis-à-vis their stage counterparts" (more prevalent before Rodgers and Hammerstein), and one in which films "tend to be relatively faithful."[49] *Camelot* adheres to the post-Rodgers and Hammerstein veneration of the original stage show while *Paint Your*

[48]Significantly, the DVD releases of both films retain all of these elements.
[49]Geoffrey Block, *Enchanted Evenings*, 153-54.

Wagon takes creative license with an existing work. In terms of adaptation, the earlier film might be considered more traditional or conventional and the later effort more innovative.

Camelot follows its stage version fairly faithfully, remaining relatively true to Lerner's original script. However, a new opening scene produces a darker tone from the outset. Rather than beginning with the introduction of Guenevere and Arthur, the film opens with a scene that shows Arthur readying for the impending war. Stricken with grief, Arthur calls for Merlyn and wonders how his life could have turned out so wrong. The bulk of the action, then, is a flashback recounting the events that led to the destruction of everything Arthur believes in. This upfront reminder that the story of Camelot ends in tragedy casts a pall on the more light-hearted tenor of the musical's first half. Lerner leaves the major plot structure and much of the dialogue intact. The omission of certain characters and scenes represent significant changes that highlight or suppress certain themes which I discuss in a later section, particularly magic and politics.

Unlike the earlier film, *Paint Your Wagon* might be considered only loosely based on the Lerner and Loewe stage musical. This film makes significant plot changes, only keeping the general outline of the original 1951 stage production. Although Lerner produced the film and wrote the screenplay, the credits identify Paddy Chayefsky as responsible for the adaptation. According to Joshua Logan, Lerner asked for Chayefsky's help in adapting his script for the screen. Chayefsky produced a preliminary script which Lerner used as an outline for the final screenplay. The filmmakers retain the gold miners' California setting, the idea of buying a wife, and two of the major characters: Ben Rumson and Elizabeth Woodling (See Table 4.1 for main characters). Rumson is an even more debaucherous character, and Elizabeth's role increases in the film. Suggestively, Rumson's daughter Jennifer is cut from the film as is her Mexican love-interest Julio. Instead, the film includes the white "Pardner," played by Clint Eastwood, as the

romantic lead. Other minor characters are changed or have a reduced role in the film. While the general background of the rise and fall of a mining town remains, the ins-and-outs of the townspeople's lives differ significantly from the original conception. The most substantial of these changes will be discussed below.

Table 4.1. *Paint Your Wagon* Main Characters.

Stage:	Screen:
Ben Rumson Jennifer Rumson Julio Valveras Elizabeth Woodling	Ben Rumson Pardner Elizabeth Woodling

The two films take similar approaches to faithfulness in regards to music as they do to the nonmusical elements of the plays. *Camelot* cuts only five songs entirely (see Table 4.2 and Appendix B for full comparison). The omission of certain songs accommodates adjustments made in the name of "cinematic realism" as I explore further in the following section. The absence of "The Seven Deadly Virtues" and "The Persuasion" also considerably reduces the role of Mordred in the film. He does not sing at all. Therefore, his insidious part in the downfall of Camelot is downplayed in favor of other characters. *Paint Your Wagon*, however, cut over half of the songs from the stage production and added five new songs in order to fit the highly altered film plot (Table 4.3 and Appendix B). André Previn composed the music for the new songs and Lerner wrote the lyrics. Both films also adhered to the filmic convention of exploiting the larger Hollywood resources by re-orchestrating the score (see Appendix A for credits).

Table 4.2. *Camelot* Cut Songs.

The Jousts – Act I, Scene 9 (Arthur, Guenevere, and Ensemble)
Before I Gaze at You Again – Act I, Scene 10 (Guenevere)
The Seven Deadly Virtues – Act II, Scene 1 (Mordred)
The Persuasion – Act II, Scene 4 (Mordred and Morgan Le Fey)
Fie on Goodness – Act II, Scene 5 (Knights)

Table 4.3. *Paint Your Wagon* Cut and Added Songs.

Cut Songs:	Added Songs:
Rumson What's Goin' On Here? How Can I Wait? Trio In Between Carino Mio Rope Dance Can-Can Another Autumn Movin' All For Him	The First Thing You Know A Million Miles Away Behind the Door Here It Is The Best Things in Life Are Dirty Gold Fever

As I have shown in the introduction to this chapter, the content of films in the late sixties began to change drastically; *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* reflect these new attitudes through their own narrative treatments. In these two films, sexual relationships undergird the entire plot and how each film handles sex in particular reveals their tendency to lean more towards the conventional or radical mode of presentation. I explore relationships, sex, and sexuality in more depth later in this chapter. However, it is worth highlighting here how the two films use sex in an attempt to connect with the youth audience. *Camelot* is by far the more conservative of the two films. However, the earlier film includes more implied nudity. It thus straddles the line between a family friendly film and a hint of the risqué.

Paint Your Wagon, in some ways, revels in the newfound sense of freedom that pervaded Hollywood at the time. However, the emphasis on sex in this film is relegated to the dialogue instead of being presented in the visuals. The most nudity that the audience sees occurs when Ben rips Elizabeth's bodice off before she pulls a gun on him and demands respect (Figure 4.1). The population of No Name City has lots of sex in the second half of the film, and with prostitutes no less, but the activity happens off screen. On the other hand, sex talk and bawdy

humor are by no means in short supply. The subtlety and double-entendres that infuse the dialogue and lyrics of many musicals, including *Camelot*, is replaced by crude jokes and obvious references to sex. The acquisition of a bunch of "French tarts" is a turning point in the plot and leads the mining town into its debauched behavior. Towards the end of the film, Ben introduces the young and innocent Horton Fenty to the wanton ways of No Name City. He teaches him to drink and smoke as well as buying him a tumble with one of the girls. Before returning him to his God-fearing parents, Ben warns "You wasn't in no tunnels, you wasn't in no saloon, and in no…" Horton cuts him off with "I remember!" before Ben can say woman, but it hangs in the air. To the chagrin of Paramount, the constant reference to prostitutes, sex, and of course the ménage-a-trois earned *Paint Your Wagon* a Mature (M) rating.[50]

Figure 4.1. Elizabeth's Revealing Corset. Screen Capture.

Like musicals such as *The Sound of Music*, *Camelot* joins together aspects of musical and cinematic history. In its stage incarnation, *Camelot* draws on tropes from the musical subgenre operetta. As Knapp affirms, it is Guenevere who inhabits the world of operetta, particularly before her emotional affair with Lancelot.[51] Therefore, the musical remains firmly rooted in long-established musical theater types. The film also plays on the elements of British heritage and legend inherent in *Camelot*. The choice of two leading actors with backgrounds in Shakespearean theatre brings a sense of gravitas and pride in the theatrical traditions of the

[50]*New York Times* articles reveal that the studio appealed the MPAA's decision twice.
[51]Knapp, *Personal Identity*, 171.

country. While most of the film was shot on a Warner backlot, Logan did manage to secure some time in Spain for location shooting. Here, the filmmakers utilized medieval castles meant to evoke the lost or since modernized castles from England's past. Most significantly, the film draws on the now conventional cinematic epic spectacle. Sheldon Hall and Steve Neale observe that these terms have had fluid or loose meanings throughout their use. Nonetheless, the epic "was as indicative of size and expense as it was of particular kinds of historical setting, of protagonists who are caught up in large-scale events as it was of those who sway the course of history or fate of nations" while spectacle refers more to the "presence of spectacular settings, action, and scenes."[52] *Camelot* contains all of these elements. With its thirteen million dollar budget, the film employed forty-five highly detailed sets plus location shooting. In an interview, Logan stated that he worked with John Truscott to create a unique look to represent a period out of time for the film. The wedding of Arthur and Guenevere provides a prime example with a great candlelit hall and Redgrave wearing a twelve thousand dollar gown for this short scene (Figure 4.2). Another example is the knighting of Lancelot in which the filmmakers focused on lavish visuals (Figure 4.3). The jousts and fighting during the dissolution of Arthur's dream also conform to ideas of the epic (Figure 4.4). Furthermore, the legendary content of the film in which lust affects the state of a kingdom fits in with one definition of the epic. Thus, *Camelot* combines elements of various genres or types of filmmaking to produce an epic musical with a focus on the spectacular.

[52]Sheldon Hall and Steve Neale, *Epics, Spectacles, and Blockbusters: A Hollywood History* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010), 5.

Figure 4.2. Guenevere's Wedding Gown. Screen Capture.

Figure 4.3. Knighting of Lancelot: *a*, Great Hall; *b*, Arthur knights Lancelot with Excalibur. Screen Captures.

Figure 4.4. Fighting Between Knights. Screen Capture.

A hallmark of New Hollywood directors such as Robert Altman includes the re-envisioning or blurring of well-worn genres.[53] In this area, again, *Paint Your Wagon* might be seen as more progressive than *Camelot*. Rather than the seemingly natural marriage of musical and epic, *Paint Your Wagon* blends the musical with the western. Of course, the original stage version might also be called a "western musical." However, the transfer to the cinematic medium allows the filmmakers to exploit the tropes of the western in this musical comedy. As discussed

[53]See King's chapter on "Genre Benders," 116-146.

previously, Logan also played up the genre mixing by casting Lee Marvin and Clint Eastwood. Similar to the musical, the western was in crisis by the end of the decade. Despite the revisionist approaches of directors such as Sam Peckinpah, Hoberman observes that the genre experienced its "twilight years" in the mid to late sixties.[54] Westerns of this period, such as *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969), *The Wild Bunch* (1969) and *Little Big Man* (1970), deconstruct the glorification of western expansion and heroic figures of the genre's past, instead focusing on the problematic facets of said expansion, violence, and the depiction of antiheros. In his chapter entitled "Genre Benders," Geoff King lists the elements of the classic western that revisionists reference or overturn. These include the opposition between civilization and the wilderness embodied by a town versus the landscape, the inclusion of a representative from the East, and the presence of Native Americans.[55]

Rather than engaging in a serious, critical deconstruction of the western, *Paint Your Wagon* lampoons the genre by folding it into a very silly and bawdy musical comedy. The film incorporates each of the elements outlined by King. The film was shot entirely on location in Oregon. Therefore, contrasts between the sweeping landscape and growth of No Name City permeate the film (Figure 4.5). Furthermore, Lerner pointedly introduces Horace Tabor, a rather stodgy minor character, towards the beginning of the film as newly arrived from the east. Tabor's endorsement of civilization prompts Ben's anti-civilization song "The First Thing You Know." The film also includes token Native Americans that populate the sidelines. Furthermore, Ben Rumson might be seen as a type of western antihero who constantly flees from encroaching civilization. Humorous and likeable, Ben nevertheless drinks heavily and leads the theft of several prostitutes, among other vices. The end of the film remains ambiguous, neither

[54]Hoberman, 153.
[55]King, 125.

celebrating nor condemning the behavior in No Name City. Elements of the music also evoke the western (or at least the west). Orchestrator Willard Jones pointedly includes harmonica in the two romantic ballads "I Still See Elisa" and "I Talk to the Trees." Harmonica is especially prominent in the latter song, in which the instrument plays a countermelody to Eastwood's vocal melody. This serves to connect Pardner quite strongly with a particularly western type of romanticism.

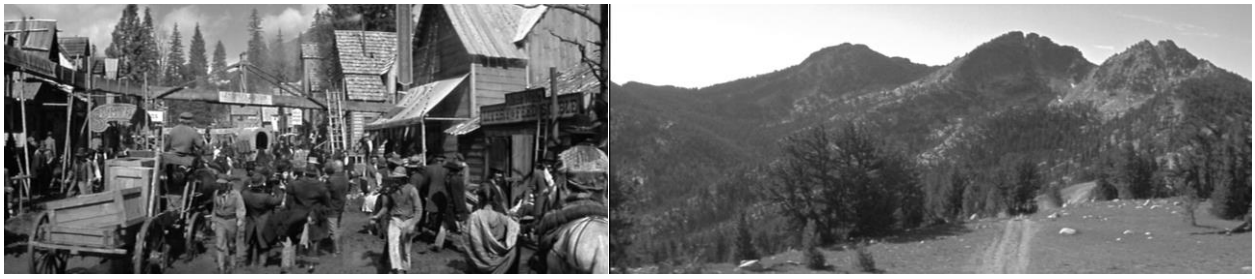


Figure 4.5 Town vs. Wilderness: ***a,*** **No Name City;** ***b*****, Landscape. Screen Captures.**

Realism vs. Fantasy

Like all of my case studies, and indeed film musicals in general, *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* must contend with the specter of cinematic realism. In the sixties, films handle this in different ways based on the intended audience. For example, musicals marketed specifically for families such as *Mary Poppins*, *Doctor Dolittle*, and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* have fantastical or magical content that allow some freedom for the demands of realism. Neither *Camelot* nor *Paint Your Wagon*, however, were conceived as children's or family musicals per se. Therefore, the filmmakers struggled to maintain the precarious balance between the musical as fantasy (people do not periodically burst into song and dance) and some conception of realism. At the same time, New Hollywood films use techniques that highlight the cinematic medium itself and even jar viewers (i.e. jump cuts, associative montage, or extreme close-ups). In this way, films of this period, including these musicals, had at their disposal more tools than classical editing and

cinematography techniques. In this section, I explore how these two films grapple with the pull of realism while exploring fantasy.

Setting has a lot to do with the appearance of realism in a film, or lack of it. At the insistence of Jack Warner, Logan shot the majority of *Camelot* on a studio backlot.[56] The film's forty-five highly elaborate sets give it a distinctive appearance. However, the sets also give the film a staged look. The few scenes filmed on location in Spain bring the staginess of the backlot scenes into sharp relief (Figure 4.6.). Much of the time in Spain was spent filming the castles, particularly the castle Coca which represents Camelot (Figure 4.7). Unlike *Camelot*, *Paint Your Wagon* was filmed entirely on location in Oregon. The setting allows for an abundance of wide-open spaces that evoke the American west (Figure 4.8). The crew constructed No Name City onsite near Baker, Oregon complete with interior settings for the featured buildings. Logan later complained about shooting the whole film on location due to the "crazy expense," claiming that production designer John Truscott went on a "loud rampage about realism and the truth of nature" so that he capitulated.[57]

Figure 4.6. Location vs. Backlot in *Camelot*: *a*, Arthur and Lancelot on Location in Spain; *b*, Arthur in a Forest Set. Screen Captures.

[56]Logan writes about this in *Movie Stars*, 195-6.
[57]Logan, *Movie Stars*, 215.

Figure 4.7. Castle Coca (Camelot).
Screen Capture.

Figure 4.8. Oregon's Open Space.
Screen Capture.

Logan exploits the medium of film in a manner both detrimental and beneficial to the films. Critics and scholars alike censured Logan for using the resources at his disposal ineffectively. Knapp calls *Camelot*, along with *Man of La Mancha*, a "misguided attempt to bring full filmic reality to projects created specifically for the Broadway stage, where idealistic visions create a more powerful sense of reality than can naturalized settings and 'realistic' armor, castles."[58] Taking this view, the replacement of the song "The Jousts" with an actual onscreen joust might be seen as undesirable. However, the change makes filmic sense. In *Paint Your Wagon*, the sweeping vistas filled with traveling wagons that open and close the film are among the most impressive scenes. The cinematography and editing have also been disparaged in these films. *Camelot*, for instance, revels in facial close-ups of the three main characters in order to convey their longing and anguish (Figure 4.9). Crowther and Champlin both found the

[58]Knapp, *Personal Identity*, 169.

abundance of close-ups belabored and entirely unsuccessful. The beginning of *Paint Your Wagon* employs a point of view shot of a wagon crashing downhill that is at odds with most of the film. Tellingly, Logan blames this shot on Lerner's interference rather than any directorial deficiencies of his own.[59] In fact, he states that Lerner made the final cut of the film alone. However, other devices favored by Logan, such as long fades in musical numbers, pervade the film (Figure 4.10).

Figure 4.9. Representative Close-ups: *a*, Arthur; *b*, Guenevere; *c*, Lancelot. Screen Captures.

Figure 4.10 Fade in "They Call the Wind Maria." Screen Capture.

In his discussion of the stage version of *Camelot*, Knapp looks at the interaction between magic and idealism. While Knapp acknowledges that "magic stands behind and informs Arthur's idealism," he contends that eventually "idealism displaces it."[60] Though magic is a tangible presence (as tangible as magic can be), the musical largely moves away from its influence. Miller perceives that "in Act II, the real world collides with Arthur's ideal and we see that no one

[59]Logan, *Movie Stars*, 224.
[60]Knapp, *Personal Identity*, 172.

can live in an ideal world."[61] Despite the use of magic at the climax of the play (discussed below), it is ultimately the clash between earthy concerns and idealism that causes the destruction of Arthur's dreams.

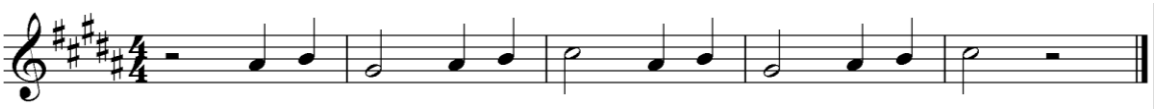
The film further reduces the role of magic in the story of *Camelot*, even implying that it might not be real. Due to this, one might extrapolate that unlike other film musicals which contain elements of magic, *Camelot* is not intended for a family audience in the same way. In the stage show, magic is an actual presence that manifests in the characters of Merlyn and Morgan Le Fey and helps to shape the events of the play. The stage version includes scenes in which Merlyn interacts with other characters, talking with Sir Dinadan in Act I, Scene 2 for example. Early in the plot, Nimue sings a song that calls Merlyn away from Camelot. Lerner cuts this scene from the film. Instead, Merlyn has left Arthur to his own devices long before he meets Guenevere. Therefore, the only time the sorcerer appears in the film is when Arthur calls on him when alone. The film also circumvents the magic that prevents Arthur from protecting Lancelot and Guenevere from being discovered. In the stage version, Mordred convinces Morgan Le Fey to surround Arthur with a magic circle that binds him to that spot in the forest. The removal of Morgan Le Fey from the film also eliminates her magic circle. Lerner replaces this scene with a more mundane yet insidious device. Mordred simply asks Arthur to remain in the forest for the night in order to prove the virtue of his loved ones. Arthur, therefore, remains for a time of his own free will before realizing his horrible mistake.

Lerner leaves open the very plausible possibility that the film incarnation of Merlyn exists only in the struggling king's mind. Scenes that feature the wizard are set off using Vaseline on the camera lens to frame the image with hazy edges, a device long used to denote

[61]Miller, *Harold Hill*, 5.

memory or fantasy (Figure 4.11). In calling on Merlyn, Arthur blends memory of the past with events in the present. Also, the exercises that Merlyn set for Arthur, specifically changing into animals in order to learn new ways of thinking, seem to be imaginative rather than an enchantment. When Arthur explains this practice to Guenevere, he states that he did not physically change into animals but simply pretended to do so – a caveat not present in the stage script. Similarly, although the film includes a scene towards in the end in which Arthur presumably morphs into both a fish and a bird, the audience never actually sees the transformation. Mordred interrupts the king's reveries. Arthur seems to float down, but neither acknowledges anything out of the ordinary (Figure 4.12). The score reinforces the ambiguous nature of magic. In the stage production, an offstage voice, acknowledged by Merlin as Nimue, calls the wizard away with the song "Follow Me." The film cuts this scene but not the music. Pieces of "Follow Me" can be heard in the orchestral background music. For example, the opening motive accompanies Arthur's description of Merlyn's lessons (Example 4.1). Non-diegetic voices finally sing the song when Arthur talks to Merlyn alone in the forest before Mordred's unwelcome intrusion.

Example 4.1. Opening Motive of "Follow Me."[62]



FOLLOW ME (from "Camelot")
Lyrics by ALAN JAY LERNER
Music by FREDERICK LOEWE

[62]All musical examples from *Camelot* are drawn from Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe, *Camelot*, Vocal Score (New York: Chappell Music Company, 1962).

Figure 4.11. Merlin as Memory. Screen Capture.

Figure 4.12. Arthur Floats. Screen Capture.

Although *Paint Your Wagon* does not deal in fantasy in the same way that *Camelot* does, the film does engage in a sort of religious allegory. Like so many aspects of the film, the religious dimension is an addition not present in the stage version. Explicit religious topics in musicals would come to a head in 1973 with the film versions of *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Godspell*, which both explore the teachings and final days of Jesus. *Paint Your Wagon*, however, deals with Christianity more obliquely. The depraved No Name City represents a mid-nineteenth century western Sodom and Gomorrah that eventually faces its own judgment day. Vincent Canby disliked the parallels, calling them "neither profound nor funny."[63] Lerner and Chayefsky seemingly cannot decide whether to treat the issue of religion seriously or use it as a source of humor. Thus, the film wobbles between a realistic depiction of religious influence and a heavy-handed send-up of Christian beliefs.

As the town sinks deeper into sin, the film introduces a new character, an evangelical preacher – referred to simply as Parson – who stands in contrast to No Name City's drunken

[63]Canby, "Amiable *Paint Your Wagon*."

population. Parson enters No Name City after the Intermission. The traveling preacher has unkempt hair, a large beard, boots, and a mountain man jacket derivative of Native American design (Figure 4.13). From his appearance, it is clear that he wanders around the west perhaps attempting to convert Native Americans and preaching the Gospel to new settlements. He has even taken a Native American wife, Princess Hummingbird, whom he brings to No Name City. At the time of his arrival, the town has grown into a city with several bustling saloons. From the outset, he condemns the townspeople for their sin. He becomes especially enraged when he hears someone ask Elizabeth how her husbands are doing and begins yelling that they are all pagans. Rather than simply having the preacher materialize as a humorous but passing character, the film lends more importance to his religious presence by giving him a song.

Figure 4.13. Parson. Screen Capture.

Parson sings "The Gospel of No Name City," which outlines the nature of the city's sin and predicts God's wrath. Added for the film version, the song featured lyrics by Lerner and music by André Previn. As the title suggests, the song is in a Gospel-style. The vocal score calls for a "medium swinging gospel beat."[64] The harmonic progressions favor subdominant-tonic or subdominant-dominant-tonic movement; the latter is especially prominent in the bridge. Parson sings the song with passionate conviction, attempting to impart his sermon to the crowd. The instrumentation highlights brass instruments and includes a tambourine as well as clapping that

[64]Alan Jay Lerner, Frederick Loewe, and Andre Previn, *Paint Your Wagon: Vocal Selections* (New York: Chappell, 1970), 22.

give the song a decidedly twentieth-century, jazz-based gospel sound. Despite the superficial markers of gospel music, "The Gospel of No Name City" remains within the realm of Broadway-based popular music with a 16-bar AABA song form. The gathering crowd responds well to the Parson, but it proves to be the lively music rather than the message with which they connect. During the final A section, Parson asks "Will you go to heav'n, will you go to hell?" The dwellers of No Name City enthusiastically rejoin "Go to hell!" Throughout the would-be sermon, men pass around and take swigs from bottles of whiskey. Parson sees that his attempt has failed when a drunk follower offers him some whiskey.

The parson figures prominently again during the collapse of No Name City. The city is holding a bull and bear fight on a Sunday. As the fight occurs on the Lord's Day, Parson rushes into the arena to deliver a sermon in front of the large crowd. Although they release the bull, he continues his fire-and-brimstone preaching. In a silly moment of literalization, Parson falls through a weakened patch of ground into the tunnels as he claims that the town will "sink into the pit." A zany chase scene through the gold mining tunnels between Ben, Parson, and the loose bull ensues while the town literally collapses from the damaged foundations. At this point, the film also reprises "The Gospel of No Name City." As the last of the buildings falls, the ubiquitous non-diegetic men's chorus sings the song. The lyrics are altered to indicate that the "reckoning day" of No Name City has arrived. The preacher's predictions have been fulfilled. The entire sequence evokes the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah yet is decidedly goofy in tone belying the apparent religious message.

Although blustering, humorous, and seemingly irrelevant, Parson's viewpoint ultimately wins out. The turning point in the film occurs when the married trio shelters the rescued Fenty family through the winter. Ashamed, Elizabeth cannot admit to the nice, "churchgoing" family

that she has two husbands. After asking Ben to move out temporarily because she has already acknowledged Pardner as her spouse, the couple begins to register signs of respectability. Ben catches Pardner saying grace before dinner and finds that Elizabeth has poured out all of the whiskey in the house. Both Elizabeth and Pardner feel restless and claim that they cannot return to their previous way of living. Elizabeth finally kicks Ben out on a permanent basis, and Pardner leaves out of a sense of duty. After the city's fall, Elizabeth, in her worry for both men, wants to return to their three-way marriage. Pardner, however, admits that he no longer wants to share the woman he loves. Though once he learns that Ben intends to leave for greener ("golder") pastures, Pardner resolves to stay with his wife. Thus, despite the appearance of unconventionality, respectability eventually wins.

Social and Political Issues

As I discuss at the beginning of this chapter, the late 1960s, and especially the short period between 1967 and 1969, saw a copious amount of social turmoil. Changes made to both *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon*, whether large-scale or simply a slight shift in emphasis, speak to (or ignore) various perspectives or movements. In this section, I will look at the political idealism in *Camelot* and the refusal to engage with issues of ethnicity in *Paint Your Wagon*. At the time of *Camelot*'s high-profile film premiere, four years after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the musical had become associated with Kennedy and his presidential term. The film version plays up this association through added scenes, engaging in nostalgia for what might be perceived as a political ideal. The stage version of *Paint Your Wagon* challenges bigotry and idealized views of western expansion through the inclusion of a Mexican character as a romantic lead. The film, however, omits this character.

A number of scholars comment on the relationship between contemporary politics and Arthur's utopian ideal, including Thomas L. Riis and Ann Sears, David Walsh and Len Platt, John Bush Jones, Raymond Knapp, and Stacy Wolf.[65] Mark Steyn details how the musical became so connected with the Kennedy administration in American culture, pinpointing a *Life* magazine interview with Jacqueline Kennedy as integral to the close ties between the two rather than any indication from the president himself. Specifically, the widowed first lady quoted from the title song:

> Don't let it be forgot
> That once there was a spot
> For One Brief Shining Moment that was
> Known as Camelot[66]

Steyn then relays Lerner's account from a touring production of the show, in which he claims everyone, audience, cast members, and crew alike, began to cry. As Lerner poetically put it, *Camelot* became "suddenly the symbol of those thousand days when people the world over saw a bright new light of hope shining from the White House."[67] Of course previous to the Kennedy association, Lerner and Loewe's *Camelot* already promoted an idealistic or utopian vision through King Arthur's principles and actions. While Knapp explores the various manifestations of idealism in the musical, Jones compares *Camelot* to the team's earlier musical that depicted an "isolationist utopia," Brigadoon.[68] Jones asserts that *Camelot* "laments a utopia failed, lost, or destroyed."[69]A utopia that Lerner fleshes out by adding scenes and dialogue to the screenplay

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[65]Thomas L. Riis and Ann Sears, "The Successors of Rodgers and Hammerstein from the 1940s to the 1960s," *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*, ed. William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 183-4; David Walsh and Len Platt, *Musical Theater and American Culture* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2003), 116; Jones, 169-70; Knapp, 170-1; Stacy Wolf, *A Problem Like Maria: Gender and Sexuality in the American Musical* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 161.

[66]Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe, *Camelot: A New Musical* (New York: Random House, 1961), 15.

[67]Qtd. in Steyn, 151.

[68]Knapp, *Personal Identity*, 170-79 and Jones, 169.

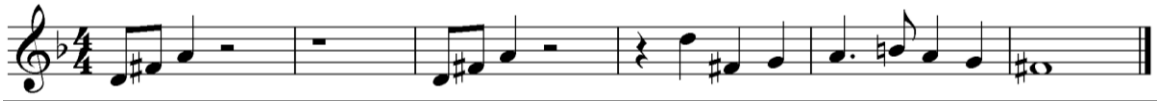
[69]Jones, 169.

that enhance the significance of Arthur's idealism in Act II, reflecting the deeper political meaning that the accumulated associations about Kennedy had given the musical.

The first scene directly after the Intermission demonstrates this emphasis. Rather than opening the second act with a scene between Lancelot and Guenevere in which Lance, egotistical as ever, writes a poem about himself that leads into "If Ever I Would Leave You," the film shows Arthur moving among his people (Figure 4.14a). A subject offers the king the keys to his town because his "Might for Right" policy has rendered them unnecessary (Figure 4.14b). The background music reinforces the utopian possibilities of Arthur's England. A trumpet fanfare accompanies Arthur's ride through his subjects then transitions to the chorus theme from "Camelot." During the ensuing dialogue, the flute and other woodwinds continue to play "Camelot" extremely softly (Example 4.2). The brief exchange ends with another triumphant sounding fanfare. The addition of this scene shows the potential of Arthur's ideas and the safety that resulted from putting them into action. However, this vision of utopian society does not last long. The subsequent scene shatters the illusion as the camera cuts to a duel between Lance and a knight of the Round Table. The knight has accused Lance and Guenevere of treasonous infidelity. Ever powerful, Lancelot defeats his accuser and demands a repeal. Before being banished, the knight states that the adulterous couple is a "poison in the court:" a poison that will eat away at Arthur's perfect England. The remainder of the film adds scenes which underscore Arthur's political acumen while fostering a sense of nostalgia for that better time.

Figure 4.14. Arthur's Utopian England Realized: *a,* Arthur among the People; *b,* Keys to the City. Screen Captures.

Example 4.2 Theme from "Camelot."



CAMELOT (from "Camelot")
Lyrics by ALAN JAY LERNER
Music by FREDERICK LOEWE

In order to safeguard Lancelot and Guenevere's secret, Arthur puts a new law into place that requires a civil court rather than dueling in order to decide the verdict of an accused crime. Of course, this law, with malicious help from Mordred, ultimately causes the downfall of the tragic lovers and Arthur's perfect kingdom. Arthur discusses his newest idea in Act II, Scene 2 of the book. In addition, the film continually brings up the need for evidence and a trial in order to resolve a proposed crime. Lancelot apprises Guenevere of the imminent change. He lets her know that in making sure no evidence can be found against them, Arthur will surely never give the couple the opportunity to be alone again. Arthur further explains the process of the court twice more to his friend, Pellinore. In an extended scene dealing with the law, the old man humorously fails to grasp the purpose or method of a court rather than simply fighting and killing a challenger. These added scenes about Arthur's innovative way of dealing with crime and accusations stresses his prescience in matters of state as well as his continued idealism. The film

also cuts the knights' song "Fie on Goodness," which removes the restlessness of Arthur's subjects and further highlights nostalgia for the hoped-for perfection. Of course, the king cannot maintain his forward-thinking politics while his queen and trusted knight attempt to deceive him. His tolerance of the "poison" that exists in the form of the betrayal between the two people he loves the most, in fact the very thing that makes Arthur an exemplary ruler, proves to kill his vision of perfection. Camelot, which Walsh and Platt read as an analog for America, eventually falls, and the film highlights the tragedy of that fall.[70]

Paint Your Wagon eliminates the most socially substantial element of Lerner and Loewe's original stage production by replacing the Mexican character Julio Valveras with the whitewashed character Pardner. Jones notes that "while *Paint Your Wagon* advocated inter-ethnic tolerance, without conflict [no substantial objections to inter-ethnic union] the show lacked dramatic punch, effectively weakening the theme's potency."[71] The film, on the other hand, refuses to deal with ethnicity in any meaningful way. Since the film cuts Ben Rumson's daughter Jennifer from the screenplay, her romantic counterpart is also cut. Yet Chayefsky and Lerner obviously still felt the need for a young, romantic lead. The film, like the stage version, is filled with minor characters of various ethnicities. The film includes Germans, Irish, French, Native Americans (identifiable by their stereotypically Indian costumes) and Chinese but notably omits any Mexicans. In erasing the Mexican heritage not only from the younger lead but the entire film more generally, *Paint Your Wagon* no longer addresses the issues that stem from his ethnicity: racism, interracial marriage, and the consequences of Western expansion.

[70]Walsh and Platt also look at the connections between Kennedy's administration and subsequent assassination with *Camelot*. See Walsh and Platt, *Musical Theater and American Culture*, 116.

[71]Jones, 169.

Throughout the musical, Julio must deal with bigotry from the other miners around Rumson Creek. Proud of his Castilian heritage, Julio refuses to work for any of the other men, but instead stakes his own claim. However, he laments that he has no rights as a Mexican in California. Therefore, he must content himself with a lesser claim two miles outside the camp so that no one tries to take his gold. In scene 7 of Act 1, the thief Reuben attempts to avert his sentence by blaming the innocent Julio. He claims that "them Mexicans are always stealin'. They oughta be lynched."[72] Fortunately, the others do not believe his empty assertions, and the rightful thief is hanged. Closely related to the racist behavior of the miners is the begrudging acknowledgement that Mexicans had populated California long before they arrived. When Jake resignedly says that Julio will not work for him, the most overtly racist character Reuben exclaims "Tell him he's gotta! Damn Mexicans! When they gonna learn this ain't their land anymore!"[73] Another gold miner, Irishman Mike Mooney tries to capitalize on Julio's perceived knowledge of the land by asking him to help find the legendary lake of gold. Julio's awareness of the disadvantages caused by this type of bigotry provides the largest obstacle for his relationship with Jennifer Rumson. He asks her to go east to school so that he can try to make money to support her in a year's time – an endeavor that ultimately fails as the gold lines run dry and he fails in his search for the lake with Mike. Despite these impediments, the couple finally ends up together, even overcoming Ben's initial reluctance.

The alterations reflect an awareness of the socio-cultural situation of the time. When read as a metaphor for the Kennedy administration, the adaptation of *Camelot* plays on nostalgia for an optimistic America that had been crumbling away since the assassination of Kennedy as race

[72]Alan Jay Lerner, *Paint Your Wagon: A Musical Play in Two Acts* (New York: Coward-McMann, 1952), 59.

[73]Ibid., 20.

riots, Vietnam War protests, and other social and political ills faced the country. *Paint Your Wagon*, on the other hand, expressly removes ethnic issues from the plot. Although the black civil rights movement received media attention and affected portrayals of African Americans in Hollywood, the Chicano movement was less high profile at this time. Furthermore, the film version of *Paint Your Wagon* stresses humor over serious engagement with social issues. To that end, its "progressiveness" leans more towards an interaction with the so-called sexual revolution than any other movement or issue of the sixties. In fact, both *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* illustrate the newfound freedom in the depiction of sex and alternative relationships.

Relationships and Sex

The plots of *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* center on unconventional love triangles in which two men share one woman. An implication of alternative choices to heteronormative monogamous relationships is inherent within the basic plot of each film. The sense of freedom that the end of the Code, rising New Hollywood aesthetics, and wider social acceptance of sex allowed the filmmakers to examine sexuality more openly than in previous years. And it seems that Logan was the very director to emphasize this aspect of these musicals. By this time, Logan had gained a reputation for reveling in sexiness and the depiction of sex in his productions. For example, he came up with the device of Lieutenant Cable removing his shirt during a blackout in order to indicate that Cable and Liat had engaged in sexual intercourse in the original production of *South Pacific*. Logan himself writes about his interest in sex, claiming that "sex or physical love is the greatest force in nature" and "sex, when unashamed, is hilarious."[74] Tellingly, these two viewpoints shine through the film versions of *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon*, respectively. Logan and his collaborators touch on issues of heterosexual and homosexual love and lust in

[74]Logan, *Movie Stars*, 232 and 235.

these films. In this section, I look at how each film explores an explicitly homosocial and implicitly homoerotic depiction, suggestions of sex, and to some extent, an engagement with women's rights over their bodies and feminism.

Musical theater scholars comment on the remarkably chaste portrayal of the legendary love triangle between King Arthur, Guenevere, and Sir Lancelot in Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe's 1960 stage musical *Camelot*. Knapp emphasizes ideal love, stating that the "unconsummated love between Lancelot and Guenevere becomes the ache of idealism itself."[75] In reference to the relationship between Arthur and Guenevere, Wolf declares that "they get along fine; she knits, and he begins to articulate a new political vision of peace and democracy."[76] Yet this seemingly desexualized love triangle allows for alternate readings and performances of the text. And it is these complications and ambiguities that often seem most convincing, and that the film plays on. Both Wolf and Bruce Kirle detect an ambiguity in the depiction of the various couples involved in the love triangle: Arthur and Guenevere, Arthur and Lancelot, and Lancelot and Guenevere. Kirle notes that Lerner remains "deliberately vague about the sex lives of his characters."[77] Similarly, Wolf identifies a certain sense of "ambivalence about gender and desire."[78] Both authors discuss this textual openness in terms of homosexuality and/or queer readings. They each acknowledge the homoeroticism that occurs in the sharing of a woman by two men. Wolf further says that Lancelot and Arthur are "set up as opposites and suggestively as lovers."[79] She also posits Guenevere as a femme/lesbian who escapes the confines imposed by the world of men by entering a convent at the end of the action. Despite the

[75]Knapp, *Personal Identity*, 178.
[76]Wolf, *A Problem Like Maria*, 161.
[77]Bruce Kirle, *Unfinished Show Business: Broadway Musicals as Works-in-Process* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005), 164.
[78]Wolf, *Problem Like Maria*, 169.
[79]Ibid., 164.

ambiguity, as Miller asserts, "unlike most romantic triangles, each of the three needs something from the other two."[80]

This reading certainly does not disappear in the film version. In fact, the more overt implications of sexual relations can be seen as adding another level of homoerotic pleasure under the guise of heterosexual desire. Critics and scholars have found Richard Harris's campy performance an indicator of homoerotic subtext. Indeed, the way Harris portrays Arthur's constant gushing over Lancelot and his facial expressions involve the "exaggeration and an expressive lack of proportion, either through investing enormous expressive energy in the seemingly trivial or by seeming to trivialize the most serious of subjects" that Knapp identifies as part of camp's broad definition.[81] However, as Bosley Crowther observes, the hint of a "clandestine ménage-a-trois…isn't developed sufficiently to make it daring or interesting."[82] Instead, the film displays the increasing freedom in depicting (hetero)sexual encounters, as evidenced by contemporary films such as *The Graduate* and *Bonnie and Clyde*. The film strongly implies that Guenevere and Lancelot betray Arthur not only in thought but deed, consummating their love. Furthermore, the film shows the married couple to enjoy all the benefits that their relationship engenders before the queen cuckolds her husband. The film contrasts feelings of love and lust in a number of key scenes through changes and additions that Lerner made to the screenplay, music, cinematography, editing, as well as the actors' performances.

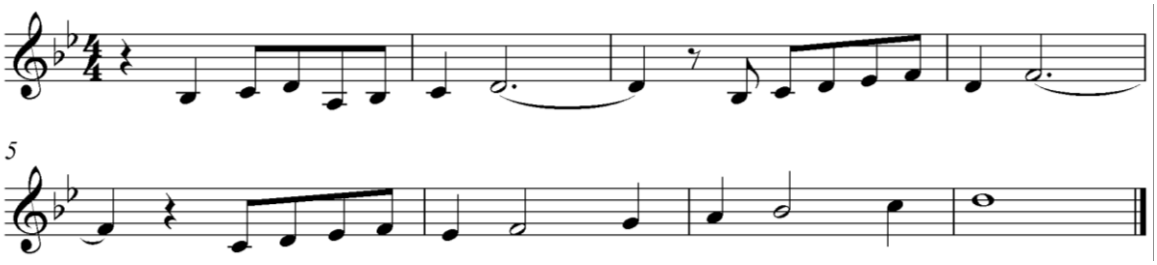
Close-ups on the faces of Richard Harris, Vanessa Redgrave, and Franco Nero, playing Arthur, Guenevere, and Lancelot respectively, reveal deep inner longings and anguish. In several

[80]Miller, *Harold Hill*, 15.
[81]Knapp, *Personal Identity*, 7.
[82]Bosley Crowther, "Screen: *Camelot* Arrives at Warner: Film Hasn't Overcome Stage Plays Defects," *New York Times*, October 26, 1967.

scenes between the three of them, this technique highlights the faces and therefore, the feelings of the suffering lovers. Although Arthur tries to quash his hurt and ignore the developing relationship between the two loves of his life, he cannot always hide his sadness. Similarly, Guenevere and Lancelot often do not maintain a serene appearance. Lancelot's miracle at the royal joust marks the first realization of romantic feelings between him and Guenevere. The camera shows facial close-ups of all three protagonists in order to underscore the true beginning of the drama (Figure 4.15). Silence reigns as Guenevere stares at the extraordinary knight and Arthur watches the exchange. The entrance of a non-diegetic, instrumental version of "If Ever I Would Leave You" divulges the incipient romance between Guenevere and Lancelot to the audience (Example 4.3). The strings play a soft, ethereal chord in the higher register while the oboe intones the song's melody. The film cuts to a shot of Guenevere alone in bed while "If Ever I Would Leave You" still plays in the background. The shot of Guenevere daydreaming of Lancelot in bed combined with their signature love song highlights her feelings of lust for the dashing young knight. Soon after, Lancelot admits that his newfound notice of the queen has made him "fall to earth." The admission foreshadows the passion between the disloyal pair.

Figure 4.15. Miracle of the Joust: *a*, Arthur; *b*, Lancelot; *c*, Guenevere. Screen Captures.

Example 4.3. Theme from "If Ever I Would Leave You."



IF I EVER WOULD LEAVE YOU (from "Camelot")
Lyrics by ALAN JAY LERNER
Music by FREDERICK LOEWE

Two subsequent scenes between the members of the love triangle (added for the film) continue this technique that undergirds revelation, agony, and guilt. The first of these scenes occurs before Lancelot's knighting as the threesome drinks together. The soon-to-be-knight has just openly declared his love for Guenevere, and she returns his feelings. The newly-formed couple unguardedly stares at one another, and the stunned Arthur recognizes their feelings. The soundtrack during this scene is telling. Prior to the illicit declaration of love, strains of "If Ever" can be heard in the background. However, once Lancelot and Guenevere admit their feelings, the music drops out and remains absent for the remainder of the scene. The momentous nature of this turning point becomes more striking with silence than non-diegetic accompaniment. Once again, close-ups on each of their faces allow the actor's eyes to speak volumes of the characters' various emotional states (Figure 4.16). Lerner also alters an exchange about the villainous Mordred that occurred between Arthur, Guenevere, and Pellinore in Act II, Scene 2. In the film, the writer replaces the older man with the young adulterer and adds dialogue pertaining to the king's unfulfilled wishes for legitimate children. Arthur acknowledges his blame in not recognizing Mordred as his illegitimate son earlier due to his love for his wife and hopes that the

two would produce an heir. The camera highlights the guilty reactions of Lancelot and Guenevere. Lancelot (fearfully) mourns "fate," Arthur calls Mordred "the only child I will ever have," and Guenevere remains silent and looks guilty. This added conversation concerning children raises questions about the sexual relationships between Guenevere and her two loves. The film allows for multiple possibilities: Guenevere is infertile; she is not engaging in intercourse with either man; she has stopped sleeping with Arthur and uses some natural form of birth control to hide the nature of her relationship with Lancelot; or the queen is having sexual relations with both men and using birth control. The readings which imply birth control could very well be an oblique reference to the pill, which had been approved as a contraceptive earlier in the decade but remained highly controversial.[83] The scene alone remains ambiguous and allows for audience interpretation. As I will discuss below, however, other moments in the film imply that Guenevere has a physical relationship with each man at some point.

Figure 4.16. Romantic Feelings: *a*, Lancelot; *b*, Guenevere; *c*, Arthur. Screen Captures.

The second act duets between the two couples further illustrates the longing and despair that permeates their complicated relationships. The film contains a new lead-in to the song "What Do the Simple Folk Do?," which Guenevere specifically sings to alleviate Arthur's cares rather than her own dissatisfaction with being royal. Throughout the song, the married couple demonstrates their obvious affection for one another, embracing and dancing together. The

[83] http://www.pbs.org/wnet/need-to-know/health/a-brief-history-of-the-birth-control-pill/480/, Accessed 12/10/2013.

filmmakers cut the final verse that turns the tables, claiming that the simple folk "sit around and wonder what royal folk would do." This omission ends the song proper on a more light-hearted note. However, a prolonged instrumental ending morphs into a darker music that accompanies the carefree whirling that transforms into an out-of-control display of emotion. The editing and cinematography emulate the turmoil of the royal couple's feelings. As Guenevere and Arthur simply play together, the camera cuts to various angles and distances to enhance the sense of abandon (Figure 4.17a). It is their dancing bodies that provide a space for them to briefly reconnect and then realize the tragedy of their loss. Dancing brings them together physically in a moment of abandon that highlights the lost intimacy. As the couple comes to this realization, they suddenly stop dancing, a wind machine blows Redgrave's hair, and a shot-countershot of their faces reveals the broken nature of their relationship (Figure 4.17b). Arthur and Guenevere spin around a final time as she cries. The camera maintains a close-up of their faces that becomes an extreme, blurred close-up of both actors' heads in the frame (Figure 4.17c). In a cut, they separate and Guenevere dramatically covers her face in her hands with Arthur looking away (Figure 4.17d). The combination of the actors' performances and film work exposes the inner feelings of the characters. This song, more than any other, displays the tragedy of the situation. The dramatic music then extends into the next scene in which knights fight and break the Round Table, implying that Guenevere's treacherous infidelity has caused this calamity.

Figure 4.17. "What Do the Simple Folk Do?": *a*, Camera Highlights Abandon; *b*, Arthur's Face Shows Hurt; *c*, Blurred Close-up; *d*, Final Shot of Sequence Shows Separation. Screen Captures.

Guenevere's duet with Lancelot presents a different kind of relationship and anguish than "What Do the Simple Folk Do?" In the first song, the marital couple seems to be playmates and guilt takes over. "I Loved You Once in Silence," on the other hand, shows the extramarital couple to have a clandestine passion that culminates in a feeling of martyrdom in choosing to give one another up for duty. While the stage directions indicate that Lancelot "puts his arms around her [Guenevere] tenderly," the film shows them kissing before and after the song as well as a number of intimate caresses. The scene focuses on close-ups of the actors' faces, either with both in the frame or favoring Redgrave's passionate expressions as the two touch. This simple presentation nevertheless further establishes the love between Guenevere and Lancelot.

The analysis of these two duets brings up issues of compatibility between Guenevere and her two lovers. In his musical analysis of the stage version, Knapp points out what he calls the "musical disjunctures" between the betrothed couple in their first songs and also shows how

Arthur "unwittingly provides the musical seed for Lancelot."[84] Therefore, the music reveals the complicated nature of the romantic relationships as well as highlighting Guenevere and Lancelot's love. As the film keeps these songs intact with only an expanded orchestration, this argument holds up for the film version. Furthermore, in both versions of the musical, overt love songs concentrating on Guenevere and Lancelot musically privilege the adulterous couple (see Appendix B). However, other aspects of the film confuse the issue. Plot elements, visuals, performance, and vocal timbre all comment on the appropriateness of each heterosexual couple in various ways.

Quite apart from sex (which will be discussed below), Arthur and Guenevere have the stronger relationship. Their bond is based in large part on companionship; they are playmates and confidantes. In both the stage show and the film, their meeting sets up a pleasant friendship. Furthermore, the performances of Redgrave and especially Harris imply that each is genuinely attracted to the other. Much of the rest of the film confirms their compatibility. For example, Arthur discusses all of his emerging ideas with his wife and solicits her opinion. This first occurs when he develops the "Might for Right" motto, and they work out the details of the Round Table. She shares in his joy about the purity of his utopian plan. Towards the end of this scene, however, the visuals separate Guenevere and her idealistic husband. Logan shows Guenevere wandering among a bazaar and milking a cow while Arthur expounds on the virtues of "Might for Right." While the king has his head in the clouds, Guenevere is clearly earthbound. She is simple, earthy, and sensual. The song "What Do the Simple Folk Do?" distills this former relationship and extends Guenevere's earthiness to Arthur. Until the end, the two laugh easily together and remain comfortable physically, touching heads and hugging.

[84]For full discussion of the first complex of songs, see Knapp, *Personal Identity*, 172-76.

In contrast, Guenevere's connection with Lancelot is both more intense and on a surface-level. While Ethan Mordden suggests that Guenevere's initial disdain for the Frenchman stems from an immediate and unwanted attraction, the meeting between the two in the film belies this reading.[85] When Arthur joins the May Day festivities with his new protégé, the queen barely notices the newcomer as she lavishes the king with kisses. Lancelot interrupts Guenevere, and she continues to hang on to Arthur and kiss his face all over trying to tempt him to join in the lusty revelries. In accordance with her sentiments sung in "The Lusty Month of May," Guenevere acts out her lust exclusively towards her husband. The film also adds several condescending French translations that Guenevere uses to mock the self-righteous Lance. In fact, this entire scene confirms Miller's statement that Guenevere is both "more oversexed than your average musical theatre ingénue" and "quite bitchy from time to time."[86] After the jousting miracle which links the two, they move from watching each other from afar to confessions of love and secret rendezvous. "If Ever I Would Leave You" becomes the sign of their love. The romantic ballad, as mentioned above, marks the inception of the affair. This song also proved to be the hit of the film, even winning an Academy Award for Best Song. The lyrics are telling in that Lancelot extolls Guenevere beauties throughout every season. Her exterior loveliness is the only reason he cites for his inability to leave her.

The singing voices of the characters further complicate the issues of intimacy between these three characters. Unlike Richard Burton, Richard Harris identified as a singer. He recorded a number of albums throughout his career, had a #2 hit with the 1968 single "MacArthur Park," and his album *A Tramp Shining* was nominated for the Grammy Award for Album of the Year.

[85]Ethan Mordden, *Open a New Window: The Broadway Musical in the 1960s* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 27.

[86]Miller, *Harold Hill*, 10 and 11.

Although a successful singer, Harris has a slight voice and chose to talk-sing during portions of several songs. Kessler argues that this "restraint or ambivalent commitment to actual song forces him to remain connotatively distant from the accomplishments the arcadian musical proves possible through song: love and social harmony."[87] Yet there is another reading. While Julie Andrews out-sang Burton in the original stage production, Vanessa Redgrave's weaker voice more closely matches Harris in the film. Julie Andrews was a strong singer with a wide range. Redgrave, on the other hand, was known more for her acting abilities. Redgrave sings with a pleasant though small voice that adds a layer of sex appeal to her character due to its breathiness. Like Harris, she also talk-sings some of the more difficult passages. For instance, she talks through the St. Genevieve prayer in the woods after running from her entourage. Due to the similarities in vocal abilities, Arthur and Guenevere emerge as highly compatible aurally. Furthermore, the filmmakers chose to dub Nero's songs with tenor Gene Merlino (uncredited). The difference is exacerbated by the choice to have the actors sing in front the camera. Thus, Harris and Redgrave's performances are rawer and more emotional while Merlino's dubbing is more polished. While "I Loved You Once in Silence" is a solo in the stage version, the final verse becomes a duet between the doomed lovers. The duet highlights this discrepancy in singing and further takes away from the viability of the Guenevere and Lancelot as a successful romantic couple.

Tellingly, suggestions of nudity throughout the film strongly imply that Guenevere engages in sexual relationships with both her husband and lover. The scene which establishes Arthur and Guenevere's relationship after marriage is when the king happens upon the "Might for Right" notion that leads to the Knights of the Round Table. In the original script, the stage

[87]Kessler, 104.

directions indicate that the couple are in Arthur's study, and "Guenevere is at a tapestry easel working with needle and thread. Arthur is standing next to her." In the film, Guenevere lounges naked in bed (on an animal skin covering) with her hair mussed (Figure 4.18a). Redgrave idly plays with her feet, speaks in a sexy voice when calling her husband "the greatest warrior in the land," caresses the soft animal skin, and has a complacent expression on her face. All in all, Guenevere appears as the very picture of a sexually-satisfied wife. Throughout the remainder of the scene in the bedroom, Guenevere wanders about the large bedchamber wrapped in a sheet, both teasing and seriously conversing with the zealous Arthur (Figure 4.18b). Much of their conversation is accompanied by instrumental underscoring that highlights the different aspects of their conversation. In the midst of their serious discussion about war and knights, Arthur disappears and reemerges naked in a bathtub. The servants wheel him in and leave. Guenevere then proceeds to soap her hands and wash his back (Figure 4.18c). The sequence will continue as the two develop the idea of the Round Table and plan to put it into practice. Throughout this scene, the basic political premise is coming into being. Yet the scene does so much more than introduce Arthur's idealism. It illuminates the highly intimate nature of Arthur and Guenevere's married life. The film sets up the couple as comfortable companions and lovers.

Figure 4.18. "Might for Right" Sequence: *a*, Guenevere naked in Bed; *b*, Guenevere walking around in a sheet; *c*, Guenevere bathing Arthur. Screen Captures.

The filmmakers conceived "If Ever I Would Leave You" as *Camelot*'s big romantic ballad, capitalizing on the fact that it was one of the hits from the Broadway production,

originally sung by Robert Goulet. The film's version, sung by Gene Merlino, won a Golden Globe for Best Original Song despite the fact that it was not written specifically for the film. In this high budget film, director Logan put a lot of resources into the romantic sequence. The cast and crew spent six weeks filming in order to travel to the various locations required for the montage. The lead-in to the song differs in the film from the stage version. The original script emphasizes Lancelot's persisting selfishness and feelings of courtly love. He has just written a poem about himself, claiming he cannot write about Jenny because "he loves her too much" to put into writing. He cannot name the traits of his love. In the film, the doomed couple resolves to part because Lancelot believes that Arthur knows about their affair. Guenevere claims that she wishes Lancelot to leave, stating that they have no future but she wants to preserve the memories of their past. This declaration sets up the montage that interrupts Lancelot's serenade.

In the film, the "If Ever I Would Leave You" sequence shows the intimacy experienced by the adulterers. Kessler shows that the sequence "deepens the narrative development of their relationship while simultaneously visually de-emphasizing… the couple's united performance of romance."[88] The stage directions in the script indicate that Lancelot "walks to her. She raises her hand to stop him and with a look, reminds him that he must not draw too near." Although they have declared their feelings, Guenevere and Lancelot love each other from afar. In the film, the two lie together on the grass as Lance sings – a picture of despair and lust (Figure 4.19). The music remains substantially unaltered, and as Knapp observes appoggiaturas with major-seventh dissonances give a "special poignancy" to the doomed love.[89] After the bulk of the song, he rests his head on Guenevere's breast, caressing her body (Figure 4.19b). The film includes a montage to an instrumental interlude that chronicles the relationship between Lancelot and Guenevere

[88]Kessler, 67.
[89]Knapp, *Personal Identity*, 178.

before the repetition of the final sung verse. An orchestral version of "If Ever" accompanies the montage; the rendition features lush orchestration that highlights the violins and flute. At first, the encounters depicted seem innocent enough with longing looks, but their physical contact increases throughout. One shot includes them swimming together (Figure 4.19c). However, they remain clothed at this point. A later portion shows Guenevere entering Lancelot's bedroom at night. The young knight lies in bed covered only by the sheets as Guenevere floats sensuously towards him her hair blowing about due to a wind machine (Figure 4.19d and e). Throughout the remainder of the montage, the two steal away to a secret cabin in winter and Lancelot remembers a topless Guenevere lying on a bank in summer (Figure 4.19f). The montage concludes to Lancelot's final verse, showing Guenevere's beauty in spring, summer, winter, and fall.

Figure 4.19. "If Ever I Would Leave You" Montage: *a,* Lancelot Caresses Guenevere; *b* Two Lovers Lie in Grass; *c,* Lancelot and Guenevere Swim; *d,* Lancelot, Unclothed, Sits Up in Bed; *e,* Guenevere Comes to Lancelot's bed; *f,* Lancelot Remembers Guenevere Sunbathing Topless. Screen Captures.

In the original conception of *Paint Your Wagon*, Lerner and Loewe clearly conceived of the primary romance being between the interracial couple Julio Valeras and Jennifer Rumson. The songs "I Talk to the Trees," "How Can I Wait?," "Carino Mio," and "All For Him"

musically chronicle the pair's relationship. Tellingly, all of the songs but "I Talk to the Trees" were cut from the film, which weakens the love story aspect of the musical. The lyrics of Jennifer's two solo songs, "How Can I Wait?" and "All for Him," are connected to elements of the original plot, namely her secret meetings with Julio and the notion that the knowledge she gained back East was "all for him." Of course, the duet "Carino Mio" reflects Julio's ethnicity to some extent with the Spanish phrase "carino mio" (the rest of the song is in English) and the soft sounds of the guitar in the instrumentation. Clint Eastwood sings the lyrical "I Talk to the Trees." While it retains its romantic meaning, Pardner does not confess his love to Elizabeth as Julio does to Jennifer. Instead, he wanders through the landscape on his own, telling the trees of his newfound love. Julio "talks to the trees" out of social necessity due to the bigotry of the prospecting community. Pardner, on the other hand, has proven to be a gentle loner, out of his element with the gregarious Ben Rumson and other unruly prospectors.

Without the young lovers, the film compensates by building on the hasty marriage between Ben and Elizabeth. In the stage version, Elizabeth does indeed come to the small mining town as the second wife of a Mormon traveler. She similarly agrees to be sold to another man, and Ben buys her. In the stage version, the couple gets along fairly well. Elizabeth takes care of Ben when Jennifer leaves for school. However, she has an affair and eventually runs away with the cockney miner Edgar Crocker. Ben discovers this after he has sold her for three thousand dollars to the bigoted Reuben with the exclamation "Well, what do you know. Good for Elizabeth." Although Ben demonstrates a benign indifference for his new wife, he has never recovered from the death of his first wife. His song "I Still See Elisa" in Act 1 reveals these feelings. In the film version, Ben begins as a confirmed bachelor rather than a continually grieving widower. He also displays much stronger feelings for Elizabeth than his stage

counterpart. Although in a bit of foreshadowing, Ben is too drunk to reply at his own wedding so Pardner stands in and answers for both him and the anxious Elizabeth. Once he has bought and married Elizabeth, he becomes wildly and irrationally jealous because she is the only woman in No Name City. In fact, Ben's jealousy prompts Pardner to suggest at a town meeting that the men bring in prostitutes to ease his partner's mind. He also strives to put her happiness first. Pardner admits his love for Elizabeth and decides to leave out of a sense of honor. However, once Ben realizes that the two love one another, he decides to leave instead (which begins a physical fight over who will leave). Finally, Elizabeth, who loves both men, proposes what she calls a "humane, practical, and beautiful solution" – that they both stay as her husbands.

This ménage-a-trois marriage seems at first to promote the type of alternative relationships that the sexual revolution of the sixties advocated. Ultimately, however, the film presents conflicting ideologies. It fails at being revolutionary or innovative yet it cannot be considered traditional either – it is instead fragmented. The three-way marriage is a portrayal of a harmonious marriage between a single female and two males, showing the rarer form of polygamy, polyandry. However, the film implies that there is not a sexual relationship involving all three members as the two men trade off spending the night with their wife. Although Elizabeth professes her love for both husbands and the two men similarly declare their love for her, the film only contains one real love song: "I Talk to the Trees." Pardner sings this song from the stage version as he realizes and struggles with his feelings for Elizabeth.

His appropriation of the romantic ballad is important because Pardner embodies conventionality throughout the film. Until Ben declares him his "pardner," Sylvester Newel (alias Pardner) intends to farm rather than search for gold in California. His gratitude to Ben for saving his life turns into loyalty and affection that gives the older man influence over the gentle

Pardner. Once Elizabeth states that she wants to be married to both suitors, Ben and Elizabeth must convince the reluctant Pardner into agreeing. Although he eventually pronounces "Damn, I think it's great. It's history-making!," he soon passes out drunk. The normally temperate Pardner turns to drinking in his discomfort with the situation. Once the Fenty family comes to stay, Pardner seems eager to re-adopt conventional behavior. He chides Ben for his wild ways and leads prayers before dinner. This taste of conventional marriage sours Pardner's conception of their original arrangement. He tells Elizabeth that he cannot return to the way things were; he needs a "real" marriage with her. And finally, he achieves his desires. Ben gives in to his wanderlust and moves on from the soon-to-be respectable No Name City. Pardner dissolves their partnership and returns to Elizabeth. Despite the film's attempt to shock with its three-way marriage, *Paint Your Wagon* ultimately returns to traditional relationship and modes of behavior.

Despite the novelty of the polyandrous relationship, the film privileges homosocial bonds. One tagline stated that "Ben and Pardner shared everything – the gold, the laughs, the songs…even their wife!" This advertisement highlights their friendship as the film's primary relationship. The film opens with the beginnings of the partnership and subsequent friendship between Ben and Pardner. Within the first half hour of the film, the pair open up to one another, and Pardner takes care of Ben when he lies drunk in the road. Only after their relationship is well established does Elizabeth enter the picture. This sets up *Paint Your Wagon* as a "buddy" film, which was a popular film type in the late sixties and seventies. *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *Easy Rider*, two films that privileged male relationships, were the two most popular films of 1969. Robin Wood posits that the buddy format exemplify the "repressed bisexuality

that lurked (always ambiguously) in seventies Hollywood cinema."[90] These undertones are certainly present in this western musical.

Similar to *Camelot*, *Paint Your Wagon* has an element of homoeroticism with the two men sharing one woman. Bruce Kirle's analysis of the situation in *Camelot* can comfortably be applied to this film. He claims that love triangles of this sort represent a "classic, closeted homosexual fantasy; one man symbolically sleeping with his powerful friend by seducing the friend's wife."[91] Indeed, Kirle calls *Paint Your Wagon* "the most startling version of this gender-fluid fantasy."[92] The fact that both men knowingly and willingly make love to the same woman renders the homoerotic subtext even more explicit. Although the film implies that they do not have sexual relations, it is not much of a stretch to consider the possibility given their living arrangement and close relationship. When Ben abandons No Name City, he does not bother to say goodbye to Elizabeth but takes an emotional leave of Pardner (with whom he was hoping to travel). Pardner admits to Ben, "Never liked a man as much as I liked you."

Furthermore, the plot relies on the near absence of women in a gold mining town. The men work and carouse together before and after women arrive in No Name City. The music enhances this homosocial aspect. An integral part of the original production, which Ethan Mordden claims gives the works "its *tinta*, its unique sound," the male chorus becomes even more ever-present in the film.[93] A men's chorus, both non-diegetic and onscreen, sings or accompanies a male soloist in the majority of the film's songs, including "I'm On My Way" (and its many reprises), "Hand Me Down That Can O' Beans," "They Call the Wind Maria,"

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[90]Robin Wood, 199.
[91]Kirle, 164.
[92]Ibid., 164.
[93]Ethan Mordden, *Coming Up Roses: The Broadway Musical in the 1950s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 57.

"Whoop-Ti-Ay," "There's a Coach Comin' In," "Wand'rin' Star," and the reprise of "Here It Is." Thus the uniformity and tight harmonies of the studio-enhanced men's chorus becomes the primary aural marker of the film. The dominant soundscape is significant in any film and in a musical, even more so. This emphasis on the male population in the wilds of California is reinforced by the cyclical way in which the film begins and ends. "I'm On My Way," sung by the ubiquitous male chorus opens and closes the film with various types of shots of people traveling in wagons. These scenes show wagons moving through wild country in a series of location shots, and at the end, revisits individual characters.

Paint Your Wagon contains a somewhat disconcerting tension between a feminist and chauvinist perspective. Several of the basic plot elements are inherently problematic in regards the treatment of women. Ben buys Elizabeth, and their marriage ceremony resembles a claim-staking procedure. The film adds a line not present in the stage version that briefly objects to this clearly odd practice. A member of the crowd shouts "You can't buy a woman for money!" However, this protestation is quickly overcome, and the auction commences. Despite his gentleness and love for Elizabeth, Pardner views her as property. When explaining to Elizabeth why he feels he has to leave at the end of the film, Pardner intones that Elizabeth "belonged to Ben. He shared you with me." And it is only when Ben renounces her and leaves that Pardner returns. The idea of women as property that can be bought also comes through the centrality of the prostitutes in No Name City. The miners literally steal six women en route to a larger town in order to make use of their services. For the remainder of the film, these women are seen as objects for the male population's pleasure.

Despite her ostensible position, Elizabeth demands respect and asserts her control at various points in the film. When Ben lunges at her and rips her bodice, Elizabeth pulls a gun on

him and exclaims that she was "bought as a *wife*, not as a *whore*." She insists that he builds her a cabin. Her only song "A Million Miles Away Behind the Door" expresses her desire and joy for a home. Oddly enough, the sound of this song conforms most to a conventional love song with a moderately slow tempo, lyrical vocal melody, and a full, particularly lush orchestration that often emphasizes the string section. Elizabeth refuses to leave her home whether or not her husbands remain. She also makes it clear that the cabin is hers, not Ben's or Pardner's property. Elizabeth also proposes the idea that she take both Ben and Pardner as her husbands. She cannot understand why she could be a second wife but not in turn have two husbands. Elizabeth is a strong-willed woman and not afraid to challenge either husband in spite of her seemingly subordinate status.

Conclusion: Adaptation and Intertextuality

Adaptation from stage to screen involves a direct reference to an existing work and a fair amount of creative interpretation. In translating *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* to the cinematic medium, the filmmakers altered the original sources in such a way that highlights the change in medium, reflects industrial changes, and intersects with the socio-cultural aura of the time period in which they were made. Yet these films also reflect the Broadway stage. The plots, characters, and songs that remain are drawn from works by theater royalty Lerner and Loewe. The original cast, their recordings, and other elements haunt the films, inviting comparison. As the more well-known of the two, the cast of *Camelot*, featuring Richard Burton, Julie Andrews, and Robert Goulet, offers a compelling case for seeing and hearing characters in relation to the actors that first portray them. Thus, adaptation by its very nature consists of an intertextual relationship. As the original stage version informs both the creation and reception of a film, so does the film version (which becomes a fixed, widely available product) present the possibility of effecting

later stagings. Subsequent productions of *Camelot* in particular provide an illustration of this relationship. After appearing as Arthur in the film, Richard Harris later reprised his role in touring productions that were more closely aligned with the film version than Lerner and Loewe's original conception of the work.

While the most obvious relationship is between the adapted film and its source material, other forms of intertextuality permeate these films. Like a great number of film musicals, including *West Side Story*, *My Fair Lady*, and *The Sound of Music*, the film version of *Camelot* is an adaptation of an adaptation. Lerner and Loewe drew from T.H. White's epic novelization of Arthurian legend *The Once and Future King*. Thus, White's writing also informs the film. Furthermore, Arthurian legend then and now populates popular consciousness. In the 1960s, even Disney tackled a portion of the extensive legend in its animated film *The Sword and the Stone* (1963). And since *Camelot* premiered, various aspects of the tale have continued to appear in popular culture, for example *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975), *First Knight* (1995), and the recent television series *Camelot* (2011). These tellings and retellings of the well-known story of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table offer a rich background for understanding and engaging with the 1967 film musical. As I tease out earlier in this chapter, *Paint Your Wagon* plays with the concept of genre. The blending of two classic genres, the musical and the western, deals in intertextual meanings of a particularly cinematic bent. The western tropes that *Paint Your Wagon* employs construct a relationship between this film and dozens of westerns. Of course, star texts play a significant and fascinating role in the exploration of intertextuality. Again, as I note earlier, actors such as Lee Marvin and Clint Eastwood bring associations from their previous roles. One cannot help but think of Liberty Valance or The Man with No Name while watching these men sing their way through gold-mining territory.

As the films of *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon*, now on DVD, continue to exist through time, they accumulate meaning. In this conclusion, I briefly discuss how Camelot, in its musical form and other representations, has evolved since the premiere of the film musical. These later incarnations color a modern viewer's perspective when encountering *Camelot*. Similarly, the leading actors in these two films have since had long and fruitful careers. In 2013, a viewer might be more familiar with Harris as Albus Dumbledore in the first *Harry Potter* films, and Clint Eastwood now calls to mind myriad images from iconic films and directorial efforts to political leanings. These considerations, along with changing technologies, necessarily impact how viewers experience these films. At the same time, *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* have not had the type of lasting mainstream cultural impact that films such as *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music* continue to enjoy. Nevertheless, they remain significant and intriguing examples of how filmmakers in the late 1960s negotiated the transforming landscape of film through the musical.

Camelot and *Paint Your Wagon* represent an ambivalence towards social changes and the newfound freedom caused by the final dissolution of the Production Code and the advent of New Hollywood. *Camelot* illustrates a nostalgia for the supposed political ideal of the Kennedy administration while intersecting more strongly with conventional film musical tropes. Yet in its refusal to exploit or even definitively acknowledge magic, *Camelot* moves away from a formula for family-oriented musicals. As such, its intended audience remains uncertain. *Paint Your Wagon*, on the other hand, blurs the genre conventions of the western and the musical. It also declines to comment on ethnic tensions and the effects of western expansion like its stage counterpart. Additionally, both films hint at alternative relationships and are ambivalent towards

feminism and the role of women. *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* thus suggest possibilities for an ‘adult musical’ that will be taken up by later films such as *Cabaret* (1972).

CHAPTER 5 – All Hell Breaks Loose! *Cabaret* (1972)

Introduction

The early seventies saw a mixture of unusual musical films, both adaptations of stage productions and newly written. *On A Clear Day You Can See Forever* (1970) featured diva Barbra Streisand in a quirky musical involving clairvoyance and past lives. In 1972, Disney's *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* and Paramount's *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* offered family fare that contained plenty of whimsy along with more serious themes. That same year *Fiddler on the Roof*, an epic adaptation of the stage show, was released, providing musical lovers with a somewhat more traditional option. Bob Fosse's 1972 film adaptation of *Cabaret* presented something different. Film musicals from the sixties either embrace the family association or attempt to move away from it to some extent. *Cabaret* fully fulfills the promise of an adult musical made by the earlier attempts *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon*. In its film incarnation, *Cabaret* enhances the highly adult themes and implications of the original stage musical. Furthermore, the film connects with the early seventies developments in New Hollywood. *Cabaret* is a fitting final case study for this dissertation as it represents the expanded possibilities of the film musical. Using a similar structure to the previous chapters, I place the film into its historical context and analyze the changes made for the film and their meaning. Specifically, this film interacts with feminism, the effects of the sexual revolution, and the social and political situation.

In the early 1970s, America was still feeling the effects of many of the changes that the last decade had wrought. A number of social and political events and movements would affect the American people and by extension, American film. The Vietnam War raged on with continued protests of U.S. involvement. In May of 1970, the Kent State shootings, at a protest

regarding President Richard Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia, resulted in four deaths with many more wounded. The tragedy spurred protests and outrage from students and others across the country as well as other repercussions. Though the war would not end until the fall of Saigon in 1975, President Nixon did begin to withdraw troops from overseas. And in fact, Nixon would go on to be re-elected by a rather large margin in 1972. At the time *Cabaret* was released, the Watergate scandal had yet to break. Rather Nixon's progress in withdrawing troops from the long contentious war and historic visit to China pervaded the American consciousness.

In the realm of women's issues, a national debate surrounding abortion was coming to a head during the filming and release of *Cabaret*. The infamous court case *Roe v. Wade* had reached the Supreme Court in 1970 and the final decision was made in January 1973. Norma McCorvey, "Jane Roe," filed a lawsuit that claimed the criminalization of abortion in Texas violated constitutional rights. While the court ruled in favor of abortion rights, the debate was and would remain a heated one. Pro-life and pro-choice groups gained passionate followers and protested on both sides. N.E.H. Hull and Peter Hoffer maintain that "the women's movement, under the banner of 'Our Bodies, Our Selves,' had adopted the abortion rights argument as a reluctant relative adopts a sickly orphan. *Roe* was a surprise victory, preempting long and complex legislative debates in the states."[1]

While Civil Rights and second-wave feminism still had an impact and further strides to make, the gay rights movement gained prominence in the early seventies. The Stonewall riots, which occurred several months prior to the release of *Paint Your Wagon*, sparked a great deal of activism in gay rights. In her discussion on film and society, Millikin sees Stonewall as "inaugurating the modern gay liberation movement, with a vociferous and public outcry against

[1]N.E.H. Hull and Peter Charles Hoffer, *Roe v. Wade: The Abortion Rights Controversy in American History*, 2nd edition (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 334.

systemic homophobia."[2] Organizations, such as the Gay Liberation Front, cropped up, and Gay Pride parades had gained traction in several cities across the United States by 1972. David Carter notes "in those early, heady days of gay liberation, the moments of exuberance certainly outnumbered those of fear."[3] These sometimes militant organizations stood ready to fight for their rights, capitalizing on the sexual revolution of the preceding decade and taking it farther in order to gain freedom for homosexuals. As can be seen by the brief historical outline above, the early seventies was in many ways just as tumultuous as the sixties.

Within this backdrop, the film industry continued to grow away from the old studio model and modes of censorship. Mark Wheeler discusses the developing business model, observing that "whereas under the producer-unit system the studio controlled all aspects of the film's production, the package-unit system enabled independent producers to develop a property and assemble the talent. By 1970, the transition was complete as the majors functioned as bankers supplying finances and renting out space."[4] So-called New Hollywood filmmakers found this model attractive. It was in the 1970s that Hollywood "auteurs" such as Francis Ford Coppola, Martin Scorsese, and even Steven Spielberg built their highly successful careers. Scholars agree that that are conflicting, multiple meanings of New Hollywood.[5] As early as 1972, Coppola's tremendous success with *The Godfather* pointed the way to the blockbusters that would characterize the mid to late seventies. One meaning at least refers to the "brief period of studio uncertainty that allowed experimentation in the early 1970s (under the alibi of the

[2]Christie Millikin, "1969: Movies and the Counterculture," in *American Cinema of the 1960s:Themes and Variations*, ed. Barry Keith Grant (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 219.

[3]David Carter, *Stonewall: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004), 225.

[4]Mark Wheeler, *Hollywood Politics and Society* (London: BFI Publishing, 2006), 32.

[5]See Geoff King on this subject in his book *New Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 1-7.

pursuit of the youth audience)."[6] It is this meaning that I contend has an impact on the film version of *Cabaret*. Krämer notes that extreme depictions of sex and sexual violence were quite prominent in New Hollywood films during the years 1971-73.[7] For example, Stanley Kubrick's 1971 film *A Clockwork Orange* depicted just this kind of extreme violence – not without controversy. Of course, these films would not have been possible without the Ratings system put into place only a few years before. While *Cabaret* does not involve the same type of violence as films like *A Clockwork Orange*, it certainly takes advantage of the expanded possibilities to produce an adult, socially-engaged film musical.

The Show

The Broadway production of *Cabaret* opened on November 20, 1966 at the Broadhurst Theatre. Broadway giant Harold Prince produced and directed the original production. Prince gained the rights to the 1952 play *I Am a Camera* by John van Druten and the stories that they were based on by Christopher Isherwood, *The Berlin Stories*. Playwright Joe Masteroff wrote the book, and songwriting team John Kander and Fred Ebb wrote the songs in their second collaboration together. The musical follows expatriates Sally Bowles and Clifford Bradshaw in decadent Berlin before the beginning of the Third Reich. The musical featured fifteen songs (without reprises) by Kander and Ebb, which included both Kit Kat Klub songs and book numbers. The stage production starred Bert Convy as Cliff, Jill Haworth as Sally, and Joel Grey as the Emcee of the Kit Kat Klub where Sally works with Jack Gilford and Lotte Lenya as secondary characters Herr Schultz and Fraulein Schneider. The critical reviews were mixed,

[6]Noel King, "'The Last Good Time We Ever Had': Remembering the New Hollywood Cinema," in *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser, Alexander Horwath and Noel King (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), 23.

[7]Peter Krämer, *The New Hollywood: From Bonnie and Clyde to Star Wars* (London: Wallflower, 2005), 54-5.

though Jill Haworth was bashed in many cases. Walter Kerr summed it up, beginning his review of the show with the statement, "*Cabaret* is a stunning musical with one wild wrong note" – that "wrong note" being Haworth.[8] It received eight Tony Awards, including Best Musical, Best Featured Actor in a Musical for Joel Grey, and Best Direction of a Musical for Harold Prince. A popular success also, the show ran for 1,165 performances.

Two major threads can be seen in the scholarship on *Cabaret*: its status as a "concept" musical and its socio-political commentary. The so-called concept musical is traditionally considered a development away from the Rodgers and Hammerstein integrated model in that a central theme, presentation, image, or idea governs the elements of the musical rather than the plot. Of course, the term, meanings, and usage of the concept musical has been called into question. For instance, John Bush Jones prefers the term "fragmented" musical while Gerald Mast prefers "modernist."[9] In his work on Stephen Sondheim, Stephen Banfield further breaks down and problematizes the term.[10] Nevertheless, scholars often apply the idea to *Cabaret* as at its core it deals in metaphor, aligning the decadence of the Berlin cabaret with the rise of Nazism. Bruce Kirle asserts that "concept musicals tend to express their intellectualizing through musical comedy conventions reshaped to comment ironically on character and situation."[11] He then explores how *Cabaret* does this particularly through the division of the Kit Kat Klub and the narrative world. As the concept musical has its roots in earlier works by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill, scholars, including Scott McMillin and Raymond Knapp, quite often make this

[8]Walter Kerr, "The Theater: 'Cabaret' Opens at the Broadhurst: Musical by Masteroff, Kander and Ebb Lotte Lenya Stars Directed by Prince," *New York Times*, November 21, 1966, 62.

[9]John Bush Jones, *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre* (Lebanon, New Hampshire: Brandeis University Press, 2003), 269 and Gerald Mast, *Can't Help Singin': The American Musical on Stage and Screen* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 1987), 322.

[10]Stephen Banfield, *Sondheim's Broadway Musicals* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 147-9.

[11]Bruce Kirle, *Unfinished Show Business: Broadway Musicals as Works-in-Process* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005), 117.

comparison.[12] Gerald Bordman asserts that the "authors and producer-director more than once mimicked the musical styles, orchestrations, and staging techniques" of the Weill-Brecht collaborations.[13]

Tied up with the notion of *Cabaret* as concept musical is the socio-political dimensions of the show. I will explore how this works in the film in more detail later in this chapter. However, it is worth noting here how scholarship on the musical has dealt with this aspect. Jones and Knapp point out how the show can be read as a warning. Jones states that the show "powerfully drives home the parallels between the Nazi agenda and racism in the United States. This musical wake-up call to Americans about 'how it can happen here' illustrates well how an issue-driven musical can still be successful."[14] Furthermore, Walsh and Platt identify how the interplay between reality and illusion in the musical parallel "the whole issue of the reality and illusion of fascism and Nazi Germany."[15] Indeed set in Nazi Germany, the political dimension is hard to ignore and both musicologists and theater critics and historians invariably mention it in some way.[16] Geoffrey Block, on the other hand, examines the cabaret metaphor as "historically misleading" and presents the show as a revision of Weimar history.[17] Furthermore, several scholars, including Stacy Wolf, Raymond Knapp,and Linda Mizejewski, explore the

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[12]See Scott McMillin, *The Musical as Drama* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 25-30 for Brecht and disjunction and 93-6 for a discussion of *Cabaret*. See Raymond Knapp, *The American Musical and the Formation of National Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 239-48 for his discussion of *Cabaret* and elements that draw from Weill and Brecht.

[13]Gerald Bordman, *American Musical Theater: A Chronicle*, 3rd edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 707.

[14]Jones, 242.

[15]David Walsh and Len Platt, *Musical Theater and American Culture* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2003), 131.

[16]For other examples, see Mark Steyn, *Broadway Babies Say Goodnight: Musicals Then and Now* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 85-87, Ethan Mordden, *Open a New Window: The Broadway Musical in the 1960s* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2001), 152-60, and Larry Stempel, *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 522-30. These sources also discuss the importance of the show, bring in the notion of the concept musical and/or the role of Harold Prince in its conception and production.

[17]Geoffrey Block, "Is Life a Cabaret? Cabaret and Its Sources in Reality and the Imagination," *Studies in Musical Theatre* 5: 2 (2011), 164.

representation of sexuality, camp, and femininity in the musical – I will deal with these themes in later sections.[18]

The Film

Given its fairly modest budget of six million, *Cabaret* had much more financial success than the films discussed in the previous chapter. Bob Fosse's film grossed $42,765,000 and was the eighth highest grossing film of the year. Of course, the musical's financial gain paled in comparison with blockbusters *The Godfather* which grossed over $130 million and *The Poseidon Adventure* which grossed over ninety million. Fosse's *Cabaret*, however, does have the distinction of being the highest grossing musical of the year. The screwball comedy *What's Up, Doc?*, the third highest grossing film of 1972, stars film musical diva Barbra Streisand. While Streisand does sing in the film, it is better described as a comedy with songs and represents the star's foray into non-musical film continued in the next year's *The Way We Were*. *Cabaret* features another musical diva: Liza Minnelli. *Cabaret* also received ten Academy Award nominations, winning eight. Among the Oscars given, Bob Fosse won for Best Director, Liza Minnelli won for Best Actress in a Leading Role, and Joel Grey won for Best Actor in a Supporting Role. The soundtrack also sold quite well. It reached gold status and peaked at #25 on the Billboard 200. Thus, the successful stage musical, which ran for 1,165 performances and won eight Tony Awards, similarly achieved popular success as a film.

Although reviewers overwhelmingly applauded Bob Fosse's ambitious vision, critical reactions to *Cabaret* varied somewhat. The major newspaper reviewers all note how different the film is from previous musicals as well as its cinematic quality. Stephen Farber of the *New York*

[18]Stacy Wolf, *Changed for Good: A Feminist History of the Broadway Musical* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Raymond Knapp, *The American Musical and the Formation of National Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); and Linda Mizejewski, *Divine Decadence: Fascism, Female Spectacle, and The Makings of Sally Bowles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

Times observes that Fosse "adopted an intimate, experimental style rather than the conventional slick, splashy musical format" and that *Cabaret* "almost always seems like a movie, not a photographed play."[19] Roger Greenspun, also of the *New York Times*, claims that *Cabaret* is "not so much a movie musical as it is a movie with lots of music in it."[20] Gene Siskel similarly praises the film, stating that "by substituting creativity for a cast of thousands, Bob Fosse's *Cabaret* proves there can be strength in the absence of numbers."[21] Siskel and *LA Times* critic Charles Champlin commend Fosse's direction and the bold difference of the musical. Champlin goes so far as to declare that "it may not be the best musical ever made – I couldn't say – but it's the most thrilling I have ever seen, the most adult, the most intelligent, the most surpassingly artful in its joining of cinema, drama, and music to evoke the mood and events of a turning point (and turning place) in history."[22]

Both Siskel and Champlin seem prepared to fully overlook any shortcomings in favor of the wonderful innovation that the film does display. Greenspun is slightly more equivocal in his praise. He calls the film "one of those immensely gratifying imperfect works."[23] Farber, on the other hand, takes the film and Fosse's direction to task. Indeed, the very ambition and successes of the film make Farber feel that it should be subject to a more rigorous analysis. He asserts that "the occasional brilliance of *Cabaret* only intensifies the disappointment we feel by the end of the film."[24] He cites the dichotomy between career and domesticity presented by Sally's decision to abort her child, an oversimplification of the mood and situation in Berlin, the relationship between sexual experimentation and decadence and the rise of fascism, and problems with the

[19]Stephen Farber, "*Cabaret* May Shock Kansas," *New York Times*, February 20, 1972.
[20]Roger Greenspun, "Liza Minnelli Stirs a Lively *Cabaret*," *New York Times*, February 14, 1972.
[21]Gene Siskel, "A *Cabaret* That Clicks," *Chicago Tribune*, February 18, 1972.
[22]Charles Champlin, "*Cabaret* A Yardstick for Future Musicals," *Los Angeles Times*, April 2, 1972,
[23]Greenspun, "Minnelli."
[24]Farber, "*Cabaret* May Shock Kansas."

characterization of Sally as some of the film's shortcomings. Farber ends his review with this lament: "Even with its PG rating, *Cabaret* deserves to be called the first adult film musical, and one regrets that, having gone as far as it did, it finally had to settle for conventional resolutions. The film teases us, but it stops short of challenging us."[25] As such, Farber regrets what he sees as unfulfilled potential while other reviewers admire the ways in which Fosse's film does challenge and innovate.

As the film version of *Cabaret* involves Bob Fosse and Liza Minnelli – two major musical figures with a large cult following – a good deal of popular scholarship deals with the making of the film. Works on Fosse, such as Kevin Boyd Grubb's *Razzle Dazzle: The Life and Works of Bob Fosse* and Martin Gottfried's *All His Jazz: The Life and Death of Bob Fosse*, contain sections discussing the film.[26] In books such as these, that include information gathered from interviews, one can read about the in-and-outs of the pre-production and production of the film. For instance, Gottfried discusses Cy Feuer's desire to bring in Fosse and his conversation with the future director, gives Grey's comments about working with Fosse, and some issues when filming on location in Germany. Furthermore, Stephen Tropiano's work on *Cabaret* for the *Music on Film* series gives much more detail on the making of the film adaptation. The author conducted extensive interviews and therefore, discusses not only the differences between the stage and film version but the screenwriting and shooting process.[27] While this chapter certainly includes such information where relevant, I encourage readers to go to Tropiano's volume or other such works for a more detailed "making of" discussion.

[25]Farber, "*Cabaret* May Shock Kanasas."

[26] Kevin Boyd Grubb, *Razzle Dazzle: The Life and Work of Bob Fosse* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991) and Martin Gottfried, *All His Jazz: The Life and Death of Bob Fosse* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2003).

[27]Stephen Tropiano, *Cabaret: Music on Film* (Milwaukee: Limelight Editions, 2011).

The Players

The songwriting team John Kander and Fred Ebb joined the collaborative effort to adapt *Cabaret* for the silver screen by providing additional songs to replace some of those that were cut. At the time of the film's production, Kander and Ebb were still at the beginning of their long and fruitful collaboration together. The stage version of *Cabaret* in 1966 marked the pair's second produced musical together. Yet this musical already contained many of the hallmarks that James Leve identifies in Kander and Ebb musicals, including the use of irony, social and political awareness, a variety of musical styles, and a focus on divas.[28] In the years before the completion of the film version, the duo wrote three more Broadway musicals together, including *Zorba* (1968). The adaptation of *Cabaret* was their first foray into film. According to Leve, Fosse and his collaborators felt the need to reinvent the musical in order to "respond to the shift in cinema toward greater realism."[29] This chapter will discuss this issue throughout, though the elimination of the book songs presents the most obvious example. Kander and Ebb provided two new songs for the film, "Mein Herr" and "Money, Money." Additionally, the pre-existing Kander and Ebb song "Maybe This Time" was interpolated by Fosse as another vehicle for Liza Minnelli. All three songs add something to the film, commenting on different characters and events. While they contributed two new songs, Leve notes that "Kander and Ebb were not involved with the shooting of the film, and they did not see it until it opened in New York."[30]

While the next section will discuss Bob Fosse as a film director in detail, I provide a brief sketch of his career and reputation here. Throughout the 1950s and early sixties, Fosse choreographed a number of musicals, including *The Pajama Game* (1954), *Damn Yankees*

[28]See full discussion in Chapter 1 of James Leve's *Kander and Ebb* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

[29]Ibid., 68.

[30]Ibid., 70.

(1955), and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (1961). Scholars and dancers point to the incredible sexuality of the choreographer's style as well as the details of the dances, the meaning behind them, and his use of bodies. Lyn Mettler claims that "the style flatters a wide range of body types, a boon to performers who don't have the traditional ballet physique."[31] In the 1960s, Fosse made a name for himself not simply as a choreographer but a director-choreographer in the same vein as colossal figure Jerome Robbins. As evidenced by the stage show *Sweet Charity* (1966), Fosse had a unique and innovative approach to the staging and the conception of musicals. As I will explore further, Fosse also had experience in film. While his Broadway reputation was stunning and would only grow with such musicals as *Pippin* (1972) and *Chicago* (1975), Fosse's reputation as a film director in the early seventies was less auspicious, as his film adaptation of *Sweet Charity* (1969) had been a monumental flop and gained the director a reputation for going over-budget – a difficult thing to overcome in Hollywood. Allied Artists hoped to hire a proven film director, such as Joseph Mankiewicz or Gene Kelly. Many authors, including James Leve and Martin Gottfried, assert that only through producer Cy Feur – who had a working relationship with Fosse – did he get the job.[32] The result is a film that might be considered one of Fosse's greatest achievements preserved on film.

The filmmakers brought on Joel Grey to reprise the role he had originated in the Broadway production. Prior to being cast as the Master of Ceremonies on Broadway in 1966, Grey had appeared in several television shows and a handful of Broadway musicals as a replacement, including *Stop the World – I Want to Get Off* (1962) and *Half a Sixpence* (1965). It was his iconic performance in *Cabaret*, however, that would put him on the map. Grey won the Tony Award for Best Featured Actor in a Musical in 1967. In bringing on Grey then, the studio

[31]Lyn Mettler, "The Fosse Phenomenon," *Dance Spirit* 7.6 (Jul 2003), 62.
[32]See Leve, 68. Gottfried tells the story in more detail, 204-5.

gained an actor who had created a pivotal role to great acclaim, thus adding some musical "legitimacy" to the film adaptation. Grey would indeed prove to be an inspired choice as he adapted his character to fit the new medium and the tone of the film version. Grey would go on to win the 1973 Academy Award for Best Actor in A Supporting Role, becoming one of the few actors to win both a Tony and an Oscar for the same role. Furthermore, the critics wrote of Grey's performance in glowing terms. As Gene Siskel put it, "Joel Grey, in a repeat of his brilliant performance on the stage, plays the emcee to the kitsch hilt. Wearing a shiny tuxedo and hair with enough grease to make it look like patent leather, Grey takes on the appearance of a wolf in maître d's clothing."[33] Stephen Farber claims that Grey "set the style for the film and supplies an authentic tawdriness that one does not expect to find in a musical."[34] Not only did *Cabaret* help to launch Grey's long fruitful and still active career, but his performance – particularly as solidified on film – would become the standard for subsequent Emcees.

For the leading female role of Sally Bowles, the studio hired singer and actress Liza Minnelli. Minnelli, of course, had an impeccable film musical pedigree as the daughter of Judy Garland and Vincente Minnelli. By the early seventies, she was an active performer – though not the star that *Cabaret* would make her. Minnelli was a successful nightclub singer and had numerous television appearances under her belt, including several performances on *The Ed Sullivan Show* and *The Carol Burnett Show*. Furthermore, Liza Minnelli starred in the Broadway production of *Flora, the Red Menace* (1965). Significantly, *Flora* was Kander and Ebb's first produced musical together, and of course, Minnelli's first encounter with the songwriting team. While *Flora* did not do well, Minnelli earned the 1965 Tony Award for Best Actress in a Musical. Minnelli had also been in two films, *The Sterile Cuckoo* (1969) and *Tell Me That You*

[33]Siskel, "*A Cabaret* That Clicks."
[34]Farber, "*Cabaret* May Shock Kansas."

Love Me, Junie Moon (1970). The former performance secured the actress her first Academy Award nomination. Furthermore, Liza Minnelli sang Kander and Ebb songs, including "Maybe This Time" and "Cabaret," as part of her act and on television performances. This promising beginning to her film career, coupled with her already swinging singing career, made Minnelli the perfect choice for the film version. Critics agreed that Minnelli's performance was inspired yet uneven and that she shone especially in the musical numbers. Stephen Farber develops this idea at length, stating:

> At the start, Liza Minnelli's slightly awkward, self-conscious daring seems exactly right for the part. Her first cabaret number, by contrast, is genuinely erotic and electrifying; through performance, Sally transforms herself and releases the sensuality that she's still toying with a little nervously offstage. Unfortunately, the fierceness and self-confidence that Miss Minnelli projects when performing are never developed in dramatic scenes.[35]

Or as Roger Greenspun asserts, Minnelli is "sometimes wrong in the details of her role, but so magnificently right for the film as a whole that I should prefer not to imagine it without her."[36] Minnelli does indeed shine bright in her musical numbers and several of the dramatic scenes. Her performance earned her the 1973 Academy Award for Best Actress in a Leading Role.

The studio cast Michael York as the now British love interest of Sally Bowles. York acted in theater during his Oxford days in the early 1960s and later performed with the National Theater, working under artistic director Laurence Olivier. York appeared in several films prior to *Cabaret*, including two Shakespearean film adaptations. Franco Zeffirelli cast him as Lucentio in *The Taming of the Shrew* (1967) and Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet* (1968). According to Stephen Tropiano, "Michael York had heard they were looking for a 'Michael York type' for the role of Brian Roberts, so he suggested to his agent that he might qualify."[37] With his background in

[35]Farber, "*Cabaret* May Shock Kansas."
[36]Greenspun, "Minnelli."
[37]Tropiano, 62.

classical theater, York brought a certain gravitas to the newly altered role of Brian Roberts that was perfectly appropriate for the non-singing role. Critics largely pass over York's performance in *Cabaret*, though Farber refers to the character's "unyielding virtue [as] boring and unbelievable."[38]

Fosse as Film Director: *Sweet Charity* vs. *Cabaret*

When already legendary stage director and choreographer Bob Fosse set out to film *Cabaret*, he was no stranger to film. Fosse had choreographed a few film musicals in the 1950s, including *The Pajama Game* (1957) and *Damn Yankees!* (1958). Three years before the premiere of *Cabaret*, Fosse made his film directorial debut with an adaptation of *Sweet Charity* (1969). The film was a flop with both audiences and critics alike. *Sweet Charity* had a massive budget of around twenty million but only took in eight. Vincent Canby of the *New York Times* summed up the adaptation's problems, stating that the film "has been so enlarged and so inflated that it has become another maximal movie: another long, noisy and, finally, dim imitation of its source material."[39] And indeed, *Sweet Charity* does not seem to quite work as well as *Cabaret*. In part, the film suffers from poor casting. Shirley MacLaine, while sufficiently oddball and sometimes funny, is essentially lackluster and even annoying as Charity Hope Valentine. For those familiar with Gwen Verdon's performance, including *NY Times* critic Canby, MacLaine would simply not hold up. Fosse experiments with techniques available to him in cinema to largely poor effect. Yet this experimentation led to many of the bold choices in the later more successful *Cabaret*, as both films adapt and immortalize Fosse's unique choreography on screen in vital ways. Thus, a comparison between the two film's use of the camera and other cinematic tools as well as movement offers a useful look at Fosse as a film director and the reasons for *Cabaret*'s success.

[38]Farber, "*Cabaret* May Shock Kansas."
[39]Vincent Canby, "Screen: A Blow-Up of 'Sweet Charity'," *New York Times*, April 2, 1969.

In *Sweet Charity*, Fosse and cinematographer Robert Surtees employ a number of techniques that draw attention to the cinematic medium. From the outset, the desire to highlight the medium comes through. When Charity's boyfriend robs and pushes the hapless girl into the lake, the camera similarly enters the water and the audience sees an upside down point of view shot (Figure 5.1). Fosse and his collaborators also utilize shots through mirrors and furniture, freeze frames, fades and other transitions, quite obviously playing with cinematic devices. The film also includes artsy, time-consuming, and odd montages of grainy, still photographs that document Charity's life (Figure 5.2). Throughout the film, Fosse experiments with the tools available to him, although this experimentation feels unpracticed and heavy-handed. Fosse employs the distancing techniques of film to ambiguous effect; the viewer (at least this viewer) seems unsure when or if these techniques are used with irony or sincerity or a little bit of both.

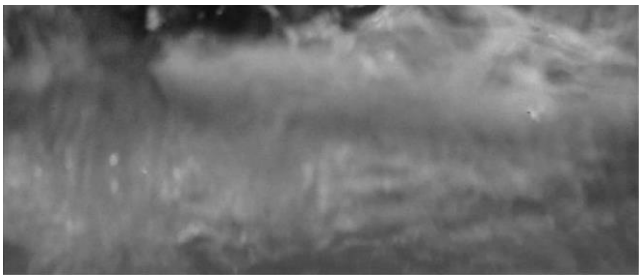


Figure 5.1. Camera in Water. Screen Capture.

Figure 5.2. Photos from Charity montage. Screen Captures.

The musical numbers similarly adapt Fosse's original choreography to include cinematic flair. The switch from speech to song is quite jarring in *Sweet Charity* as the songs have the incredibly obvious sound of studio production. The soundscape changes and the voices take on the highly polished sound of studio recordings. For the most part, Fosse's highly stylized, awkward yet virtuosic dances work better on stage than in this film. For example, "The Rich Man's Frug" in all its stylized glory does not have the same impact as on stage. The straightforward filming of this dance number only highlights its displacement. Much of the number is filmed in longer shots that emulate the proscenium. "Big Spender" appears much more successfully on film. Throughout the number, Fosse shows indications of the diegetic male audience. Shadowy outlines of men, hands with cigarettes, and drinks keep the diegetic audience and the ultimate purpose of the song constantly in mind. Thus, the dancers' aggressive sexuality has purpose in the context of the film and is put to good use by the camera. Charity's musical number "If My Friends Could See Me Now" utilizes a number of cinematic tricks. Throughout the number, jump cuts reveal Charity in different positions throughout Vittorio Vidal's apartment

as she revels in the splendor. Other portions play with stage conventions in a cinematic way. Charity does a dance routine with a top hat; an obvious sound effect occurs every time she pops open the hat, showcasing the artificiality. At the end of the number, Charity discovers a dimmer switch that turns on a spotlight in the middle of the apartment. Delighted, she proceeds to dance in the spotlight, which miraculously becomes a follow spot that keeps her in the light despite her movements.

The overall artificiality of the musical numbers and other elements within the film are at odds with the move towards gritty realism in other ways. The dance club where Charity works has a run-down dressing room, and the main floor appears rather dark and bleak with cheap, gaudy decorations. Furthermore, the film uses location shooting throughout New York paired with backlot sets to chronicle Charity's movements. The cartoonish encounters with the famous movie star Vittorio Vidal and cult leader Big Daddy seem more out of place when coupled with shots of Central Park. The mixture of over-the-top characters and musical numbers with Charity's attempts at a normal life works on the stage. The film's execution misses something. Yet *Cabaret* similarly mixes extremes to greater effect.

Fosse and collaborators shot *Cabaret* on location in Germany, using both German studios and various locations. Outdoor scenes, such as in the streets of Berlin, the biergarten, and the forest, all occurred in locations throughout Germany (Figure 5.3). Also, the weekend at Baron Maximillian von Heune's estate was filmed on location at the Charlottenberg and Schloss Eutin (Figure 5.4). Of course, location shooting had been used in musicals for some time. And several of the films discussed in this dissertation – most notably *The Sound of Music* – use it to great effect. In the case of *Cabaret,* shooting in West Berlin and surrounding areas does lend a sense of realism to the film. This is enhanced by the fact that the film cuts the stage version's narrative

songs. The studio set for the Kit Kat Klub has a similar tawdry atmosphere as the dance club in *Sweet Charity*, taken to even more extremes in the later film. The artificial atmosphere of the Kit Kat Klub becomes a site for stylization, commentary, and extreme modes of behavior separate from the rest of the film. Unlike in *Sweet Charity*, where stylization and realism are freely mixed, *Cabaret* contains the excess to a greater extent.

Figure 5.3. *Cabaret* Locations: *a*, A Park; *b*, Biergarten; *c*, On the Streets of Berlin; *d*, Forest. Screen Captures.

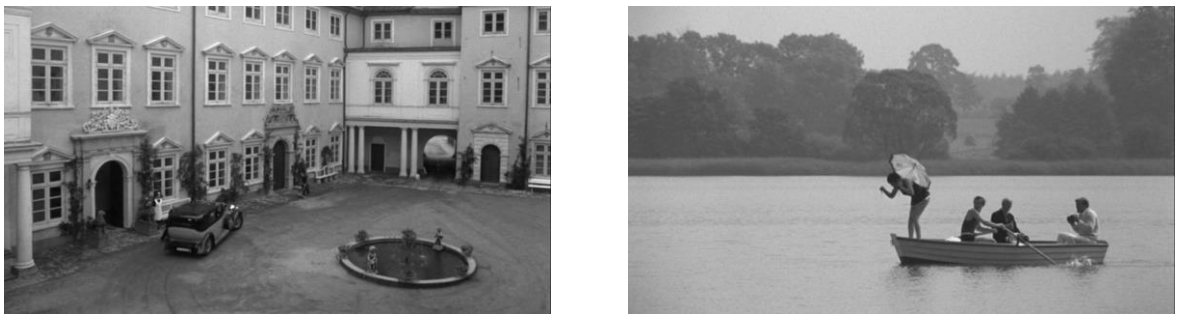


Figure 5.4. Maximillian's Estate: *a*, The Courtyard; *b*, The Lake. Screen Captures.

The musical numbers in the Kit Kat Klub thus best reveal Fosse's use of cinematic technique in this later film. As Linda Mizejewski points out, they utilize a "visual style that has

become synonymous with Fosse: dynamic editing, dazzlingly original and sexy musical performances, the use of suggestive and original lighting, and a camera that, during musical numbers is almost as mobile as the performers."[40] The opening number "Wilkommen" and "Mein Herr" illustrate the use of the camera and editing quite well. *Cabaret* opens to title credits with no music. Slowly, the chatter of a crowd emerges into the soundscape, and distorted reflections replace the black screen. The audience then hears a band warming up and a drumroll. A title card tells the audience that it is Berlin in 1931. The Master of Ceremonies appears, looks in the distorted glass, and then turns to sing "Wilkommen" directly into the camera. This opening simultaneously makes the audience aware of the fact that they are watching a film and invites them in. In a similar manner to *Sweet Charity*'s "Big Spender," "Wilkommen" includes shots of the diegetic audience at the Kit Kat Klub. The viewers see the bored, decadent clientele of the crude Kit Kat Klub (Figure 5.5).

Once the dancing girls join the Emcee, Fosse and cinematographer Geoffrey Unsworth emphasize the dance and girls' bodies in various ways. Low angle shots permeate the sequence, highlighting the larger than life quality of the performers (Figure 5.6a). Rather than using an abundance of long shots during the dances, the filmmakers opt for quick pans, many cuts, and a variety of angles that isolate and accentuate parts of the dancers' bodies (Figure 5.6b). Framing several shots through the girls' legs also highlights the overt sexuality performed in the club.

In the film, the newly written song "Mein Herr" shows Sally Bowles singing a solo number on stage for the first time in the film. The focus throughout the song is on Sally's performance. However, the filming of the chorus girls reveals a similar aesthetic to the filming of *Sweet Charity's* taxi dancers (Figure 5.7). Minnelli and the chorus all pose provocatively on

[40]Mizejewski, 203.

chairs in this number (Figure 5.8). The poses and movements utilizing the chairs conform to the angular style of Fosse's choreography. Camera angles further underscore the blatant sexuality and awkward positioning. Once again, the dancers' bodies often frame Minnelli's performance, emphasizing bodies in this number (Figure 5.8c). The cinematic techniques used here contribute to an artistic scene and enhance a powerhouse performance.

Figure 5.5. Kit Kat Klub Audience. Screen Captures.

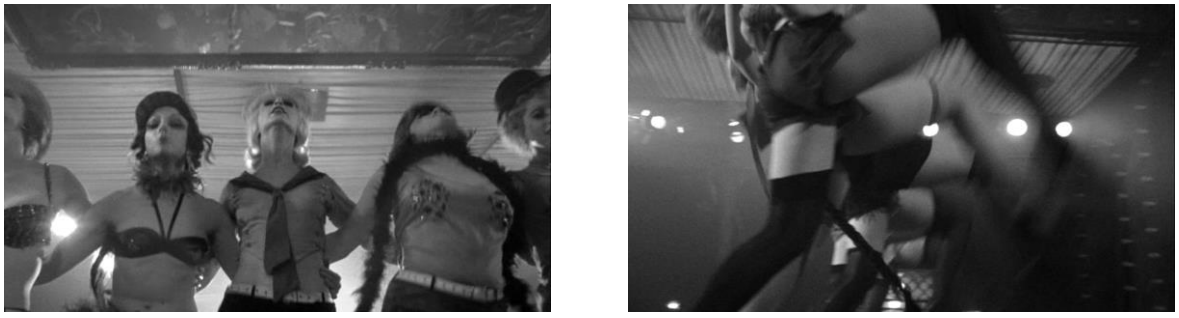


Figure 5.6. "Wilkommen:" *a,* Low Angle; *b,* Isolating Body Parts. Screen Captures.

Figure 5.7. "Big Spender."
Screen Capture.

Figure 5.8. "Mein Herr:" *a*, bodies frame Minnelli; *b*, chair poses; *c*, long shot of stage; *d*, Minnelli's costume; *e*, bodies frame Minnelli again; *f*, more chair poses. Screen Captures.

Fosse uses associative montage quite frequently in the film in order to underline the role of the musical numbers as narrative commentary. For example, the song "Wilkommen" is intercut with shots from Brian's arrival at the train station in Berlin. Similarly, Sally's performance of "Maybe This Time" is intercut with scenes of her and Brian's entrée into being lovers. In one striking scene, Fosse employs associative montage to connect Nazi men beating the nightclub owner with a seemingly humorous routine at the club in which the performers are dressed in traditional German costumes (Figure 5.9). The editing here is frantic and highlights the violence of the act as well as the complicity of complacent German nationalists. While

heavy-handed at times, the use of associative montage allows the Emcee to cinematically intrude on the film's narrative. Brief moments of intrusion later in the film are set up by the extensive use of associative montage. For example, Sally adopts her false bravado at a dinner party held by Max at his estate. After the viewer sees Sally put on her show for the wealthy guests, a cut shows the Emcee eerily whisper "Money" in a reference to song that he and Sally performed together earlier. In an even more striking moment, a similar intrusion occurs after the diegetic group performance of "Tomorrow Belongs to Me." By the end of the song, nearly everyone present has stood up to sing while Brian and Max leave. Brian wryly asks his rich friend "You still think you can control them?," referring of course to the Nazis. The camera then cuts to a shot of the Emcee smirking. This moment is particularly chilling in its implications, as I will discuss in a subsequent section.

Figure 5.9. Kit Kat Klub vs. Beating; *a*, performers in traditional costumes; *b*, beaten man. Screen Captures.

While by no means a perfect film, *Cabaret* succeeds where *Sweet Charity* does not. In this film, Fosse comes into his own as a director. He uses the medium in an effective way, managing to pull the viewer into the world he creates then periodically breaking the spell using both the diegetic space of the Kit Kat Klub and cinematic techniques (quite often both). Fosse and his collaborators seem to consciously negotiate the boundary between realism and fantasy, and more often than not does so successfully. As I have explored throughout this dissertation, the

issue of cinematic realism versus the highly fantastical nature of the musical as a genre haunts all musical adaptations. The case studies presented in previous chapters handle this difficulty with varying degrees of success. As mentioned above, Fosse deals with this issue in part by omitting nearly all of the songs not performed in the Kit Kat Klub. The nightclub and its Emcee act as a modern day Greek chorus, commenting on the events of the film. Yet the club is also a fundamental part of the narrative, which allows Sally and to some extent the Emcee to intrude on the "realism" of the rest of the film. In *Sweet Charity*, excess and "realism" are intermingled in an often nonsensical way. In *Cabaret*, the two modes coexist as separate yet are not mutually exclusive, bleeding into one another in meaningful ways. And it is this ambitious endeavor that sets *Cabaret* apart from *Sweet Charity* and reveals Fosse as a more than capable film director.

Fidelity

Similar to the approach used in *Paint Your Wagon*, *Cabaret* plays fast and loose with the original script and score in its move to film. In terms of plot, *Cabaret* merely retains the basic outline of the original script. Screenwriter Jay Presson Allen creatively adapted the stage musical, making a number of significant (and famous) changes. The film's Sally Bowles becomes an American and her love interest a typically British student – now named Brian Roberts instead of Clifford Bradshaw. In the stage version, Sally and Brian meet at the Kit Kat Klub, and she eventually foists herself upon Cliff when her current boyfriend kicks her out. In the film, however, Brian merely comes to take a room at the same boarding house that Sally lives in. She gregariously shows him around and offers the use of her larger sitting room for English lessons. The two then strike up an unlikely but profound friendship as Brian succeeds in stripping away Sally's pretenses. The couple enters into a romantic relationship, as in the stage version. However, it proceeds much differently.

After Sally and Brian are shown spending a great deal of time together, the film includes a scene in which Sally attempts to seduce Brian. He declines, claiming "it's too early" for this kind of behavior. The following exchange then occurs:

> Sally: (petulantly, joking at first) Maybe you just don't sleep with girls… (looks at Brian) Oh! You don't. Listen we're practically living together so if you only like boys, I wouldn't dream of pestering you. Well, do you sleep with girls or don't you?
>
> Brian: Sally, you don't ask questions like that.
>
> Sally: I do.
>
> Brian: Alright. If you insist, I do not sleep with girls. No, let me be absolutely accurate. I've gone through the motions of sleeping with girls exactly three times – all of them disastrous. The word for my sex life is now nil.

During this exchange, Sally uses her famous disregard for social conventions to bring the question of Brian's sexuality out into the open. Under duress, Brian admits that he finds sex with women distasteful. Yet he does not admit to having slept with men, rather stating that he has no sex life after the failed attempts with women. Nonetheless, Brian's admission does indicate that he is homosexual, even if he has not yet had any homosexual experiences.

Despite Brian's initial reluctance, he does eventually enter into a physical as well as emotional relationship with Sally. In fact, the film makes it quite clear that the growing emotional intimacy between the two leads to the couple having sex. An added scene, in which Sally's father stands her up for a date, underscores the causal relationship. Brian returns home to find Sally highly vulnerable, without her usual bravado, and without her usual garish make-up. It is when she feels her worst that he calls her a "perfectly marvelous girl," using a phrase that indexes a song from the stage production but in a much more sincere way. The camera shows the

pairs' faces in a close-up as they kiss, smile, and sink out of the frame. After their first sexual encounter, the two joke about Brian's previous failed attempts. They both laugh and claim that surely he had simply not had sex with the right girl, dismissing his homosexual tendencies for a time at least.

Other significant additions to the plot are the characters of Maximillian von Heune, Fritz Wendel, and Natalia Landauer. Max is a baron that seduces both Sally and Brian. The implications of this relationship will be explored further in a section dealing with the depiction of threesomes and bisexuality in relation to the sexual revolution and advancements in the gay rights movement. The inclusion of Max into the film's narrative is indicative of the filmmakers' approach; Fosse, along with screenwriter Jay Allen and other collaborators, prove themselves quite willing to alter the original text as suits their purposes – in this case, adding several layers of explicit social commentary. Rather than the interreligious romance between the older Fraulein Schneider and Herr Schultz, the Hollywood film brings in the younger secondary couple from Van Druten's earlier *I Am a Camera*, opportunistic Fritz and wealthy Natalia. Clark claims that this secondary romance is "more traditional than the stage version."[41] The film also effectively erases the interreligious nature of the original as Fritz eventually admits his Jewish heritage in order to marry the woman he loves. This change and the ultimate union of the two young people also significantly changes the commentary.

Just as the filmmakers felt free to alter the plot to suit the purposes of the film, they similarly cut, rearranged, and added to the original score (See Table 5.1 and Appendix B). The film rather famously cuts all of the narrative songs, leaving only some of the Kit Kat Klub numbers and "Tomorrow Belongs to Me." A couple of the removed songs, portions of "Don't

[41]Randy Clark, "Bending the Genre: The Stage and Screen Versions of *Cabaret*," *Literature/Film Quarterly* 19: 1 (January 1991), 53.

Tell Mama" and "Married," appear in other capacities such as a recording on Sally's gramophone and a piano performance in the boarding house parlor. As mentioned in the section on Fosse as director, the intended effect of this decision is that the songs are separated from the narrative and act as commentary on the action. Fosse also solicited newly written songs from John Kander and Fred Ebb, "Mein Herr" and "Money, Money," plus the pre-existing "Maybe This Time." Clark states that in acting as commentary, "the numbers that do appear in the film tend to promote something…yet each of their propositions is at odds with diegetic reality."[42] Throughout the remainder of this section, I will discuss several of the new meanings that the pre-existing Kit Kat Klub songs bring out, and look at the new songs in more detail.

Table 5.1. Cut and Added Songs for the Film.

Cut Songs:	Added Songs:
So What? Don't Tell Mama* Telephone Song Perfectly Marvelous It Couldn't Please Me More Why Should I Wake Up? The Money Song Married* Meeskite What Would You Do? Cabaret *Heard in film on gramophone or piano.	Mein Herr Maybe This Time Money, Money

Two of the nightclub songs, "Two Ladies" and "If You Could See Her," retained from the stage version accrue new meanings and thus add a different level of commentary in the film. "Two Ladies" now refers to the developing relationship between Sally, Brian, and Max. A shot of the threesome in Max's car traveling to a weekend getaway together is accompanied by the

[42]Ibid., 56.

strains of the Kit Kat Klub orchestra and the Emcee stating "Berlin makes strange bedfellows these days." Once the song begins, the camera stays within the confines of the nightclub, filming the bawdy antics of the performers and the audience's delighted reaction. The music does not undergo any substantial changes, excepting of course the standard change of orchestration and studio mixing. While only the introduction to the song explicitly shows Sally, Brian, and Max, the relationship between the song and the narrative becomes clear. Max sleeps with both Sally and Brian separately, and thus the couple might be seen as the baron's "two ladies." He insists on showering both with gifts, making them his "kept" woman and man for a short time. Certain lines within the song also will have resonance once the entirety of the situation is revealed to the audience. For example, "we switch partners daily to play as we please" parallels Max's mindset perfectly.

In the film, "If You Could See Her" breaks up a sequence that tracks the crisis of Fritz and Natalia's relationship. Similar to "Two Ladies," the music remains the largely the same, excepting orchestration and mixing, and is filmed entirely in the Kit Kat Klub. The surrounding scenes, however, recontextualize the song – particularly when coupled with the final punch line. After the song, in which the Emcee pleads for tolerance of his gorilla ladylove, the Broadway cast recording simply states that "If you could see her through my eyes, she isn't a meeskite at all." Of course, a preceding song introduces the word "meeskite" as Yiddish for ugly. Therefore, the Jewish connection is implicit. The published script, however, allows for a stronger alternate punch line: "she wouldn't look Jewish at all." The film uses this more explicitly disturbing version, which falls into line with the narrative events. Block observes that the "lyrics in fact clearly imply that Jews are not only ape-like but less than human (and less German)."[43] In the

[43]Block, "Is Life a Cabaret?," 174.

preceding scene, Fritz admits to Brian that he is in fact Jewish but covered up his heritage when coming to Berlin due to anti-Semitic sentiment. While his Jewish background would eliminate Natalia's objections to marrying him, he worries that she will be angry. After "If You Could See Her," a cut shows Fritz going to see Natalia in the middle of the night in order to tell her that he is also Jewish. Another cut then flashes forward to Fritz and Natalia's Jewish wedding. In the midst of the crisis and resolution of the secondary couple's romantic relationship, "If You Could See Her" underscores the increasingly hostile attitude towards the Jews in Germany, and the obstacles that Fritz and Natalia face.

Kander and Ebb wrote the song "Mein Herr" for the film to replace Sally's number "Don't Tell Mama." Both the old and new song showcase Sally Bowles – in her first song – with a chorus of girls from the Kit Kat Klub. "Don't Tell Mama" humorously remarks on the scandalous nature of the nightclub and Sally's job. "Mein Herr," however, is about the end of a love affair, and the woman's decision to finish the relationship. In terms of lyrical content, the song foreshadows Sally's independent decision to have an abortion and end her relationship with Brian. It also relays Sally's view of herself as wild and unpredictable, or as she states multiple times, a "strange and extraordinary" creature. The film shows both Sally getting ready backstage and the Emcee's introductory speech. Sally mimics every joke and nuance of the speech, which clearly remains the same night after night. The entire number is an exaggerated burlesque of a sexy, cabaret song. Liza Minelli appears in all black, wearing a low-cut backless vest, shorts with sequined crotch detail, thigh-high fishnet stockings, high heels, and a bowler hat (Figure 5.8). She and the chorus girls do a provocative chair dance throughout the song (Figure 5.8). The use of the chairs allows for a number of different camera angles as well as a focus on the scintillating body positioning of the dancers. In fact, these two aspects complement each other throughout the

number, mutually emphasizing one another (Figure 5.8). As noted in a previous section, several shots actually use body parts as framing devices. Close-ups and low angle shots give a privileged view of the performers. However, the filmmakers also sometimes use long shots that emulate the proscenium effect or a different type of low angle shot that is close but offstage; these shots briefly place the viewers in the position of the diegetic audience. While a "cabaret number," the filming of this song as a whole highlights the cinematic medium as well as creatively using the angular and highly sexual positions of the chorus girls' bodies.

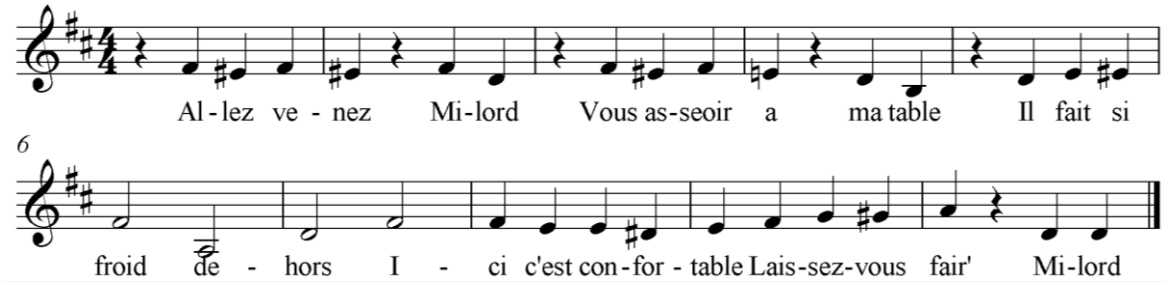
The song itself strongly indexes cabaret song writing and performance. Scholars consistently point to the resemblance of the sentiment and performance of the song to Marlene Dietrich's signature number in *The Blue Angel*. However, as Geoffrey Block affirms, "it is a challenge to find songs or even fragments of songs in *Cabaret* that directly emulate… the main song from the Dietrich film." [44] "Mein Herr" does, however, bear a resemblance to the French song "Milord," made popular by Édith Piaf over a decade before this film. "Milord" is a story song about a poor girl who has become infatuated with a wealthy gentleman and approaches him. Stylistically, it alternates between freer, speech-song passages and the more lyrical refrain with a clear meter and quicker tempo. The ends of the musical phrases are punctuated with the word "milord." Interestingly, "Mein Herr" shares many of these same features. It too alternates between slower, freer sections and a more rhythmic refrain. And even more striking is same tendency to end phrases with a short motive on "Mein Herr." Example 5.1 shows a comparison of a representative phrase from each of these songs that reveals some the similarities; however, the performance practices of Piaf and Minnelli bring out the similarities much more than a score example can (Example 5.1). Of course, Piaf was a nightclub singer, but more important than

[44]Block, "Is life a cabaret?," 172.

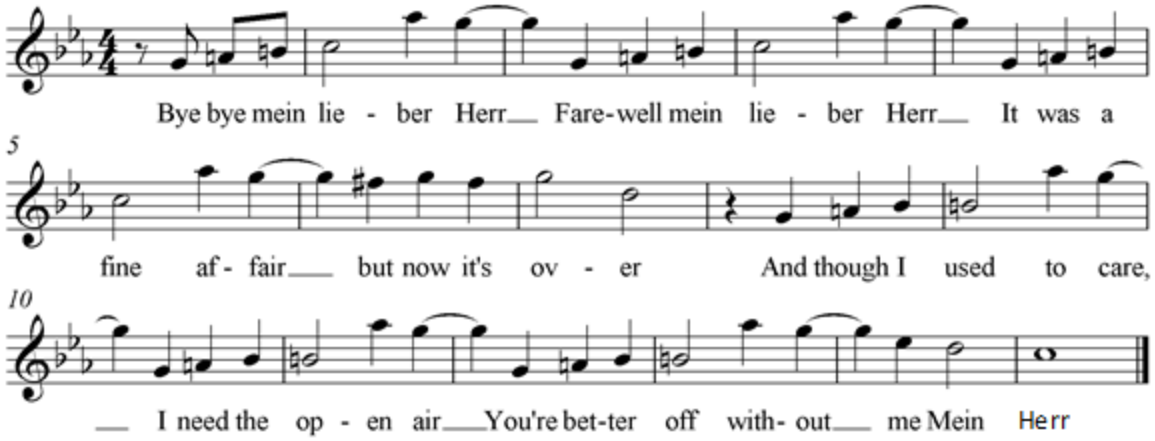
whether or not “Mein Herr” intentionally or directly references her work and “Milord” is the larger connection to nightclub performance. The resemblance to “Milord” makes clear that Kander and Ebb understand the genre and can be connected to the character Sally Bowles as a nightclub performer and even Minnelli’s own nightclub career. The orchestration further brings out the style. While the orchestra accompanies the song, the piano is featured heavily. Towards the beginning of the song especially, during the more speech-like sections, the piano part contains rolling chords, rhythmic oom-pah chords, glissandi, and other such techniques used in nightclub style accompanying.

Example 5.1. *a*, Excerpt from "Milord;" *b*, Excerpt from "Mein Herr."[45]

a



b



Mein Herr
from the Musical CABARET
Words by Fred Ebb
Music by John Kander
Copyright (c) 1972 by Alley Music Corp. and BUG Music, Inc., a BMG Chrysalis company
Copyright Renewed
International Copyright Secured All Rights Reserved
Used by Permission
Reprinted by permission of Hal Leonard Corporation

The film adds the song "Maybe This Time," a song written by Kander and Ebb years before the production of *Cabaret*. Minnelli's performance of the song at the Kit Kat Klub

[45]All *Cabaret* excerpts drawn from John Kander and Fredd Ebb, *Vocal Selections from Cabaret* (New York: The Times Square Music Publications Company, 1972). The Piaf example comes from Paul Beuscher, ed., *Piaf* (Paris: Paul Beuscher Editions, 1990).

dissolves into scenes between Brian and Sally in bed or otherwise engaging in their newfound romance (Figure 5.10a and b). The effect is that the song, while still separated as a nightclub performance, comes close to being a narrative number. Sally seems to be singing about her relationship and the feeling of worth that it brings. As the song hits its stride, however, the associative montage gives way to a filmed diva performance. Once again, the editing makes the shift clear. The camera shows shots of the nightclub audience, the Emcee from the wings, and other such indications that we are now solidly within the realm of Kit Kat Klub performance (Figure 5.10c and d). Minnelli's Sally then proceeds to give a powerhouse performance of the song, without the usual frills of the nightclub numbers.

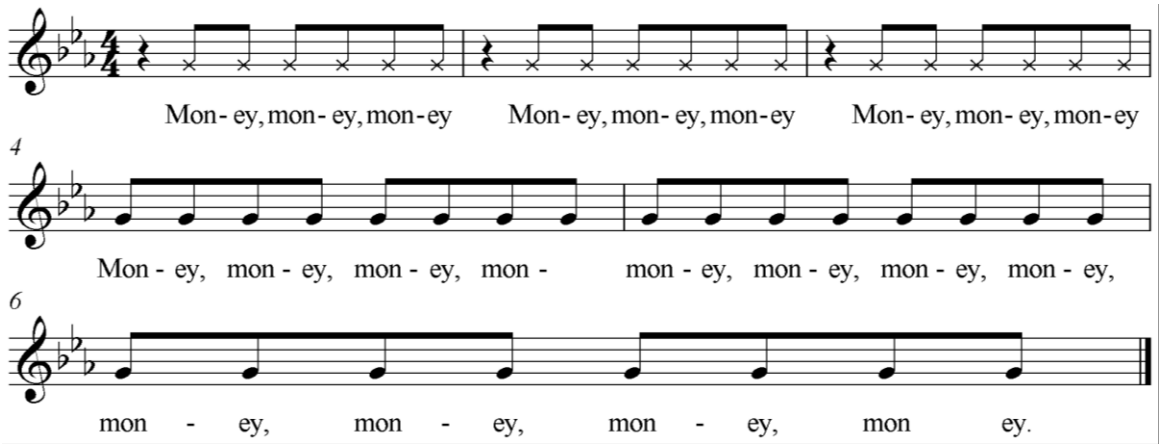
Figure 5.10. "Maybe This Time:" *a,* Brian and Sally in bed; *b,* Brian poses for Sally; *c,* Sally sings at almost empty club; *d,* Emcee watches. Screen Captures.

"Money, Money" replaces "The Money Song (Sitting Pretty)" in the film. In the stage production, "The Money Song" celebrates having an abundance of money and refers to Cliff's commission for smuggling a briefcase from Paris for the Nazi party (unknowingly). The song itself is a short, conventional little song in 16-bar form with verses that use patter. The original

script also reveals that it is a parade of girls number; the Emcee claims to have made his money "selling love" and girls from Russia, Japan, France, and America enter sporting their country's currency. Thus, the song alludes to earlier examples, such as "A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody" from the Ziegfeld Follies of 1919, "Flower Garden of My Heart" from *Pal Joey* (1940), or "Gliding Through My Memory" from *Flower Drum Song* (1958). It also engages in exoticism in a highly self-referential way. As Cliff's counterpart Brian does not smuggle for the Nazis, Kander and Ebb wrote a new "money" song for the film. "Money, Money" comes on the heels of Sally's first encounter with Max. She flirts with the wealthy baron and accepts a ride in his expensive car, which she excitedly ogles. "Money, Money" highlights the association between money and sex, which is apropos for the upcoming tangle of feelings, sex, and wealth that characterize the interactions between Max, Sally, and Brian.

Of course, the performance of this song by Joel Grey and Liza Minnelli do much to bring out the lasciviousness. Numerous pelvic thrusts and a great deal of shimmying occur in the dance. Part of the humor also stems from Grey and Minnelli storing, depositing, and retrieving large prop coins from their pants and bra, respectively. The song features sensual musical repetitions of the word "money," which become highly eroticized in the performances of Grey and Minnelli. The sexual associations are also built into the music. Consider the phrase in Example 5.2; the statements of "money" is cut up into three short, breathy iterations, which repeats three times with rests separating the pieces (Example 5.2). Eventually these pieces will crescendo, leading into a climax with rapid repetitions of the word "money" on a single pitch. This melodic and rhythmic construction skillfully indicates a representation of sexual release, realized in performance by Grey and Minnelli.

Example 5.2. Excerpt from "Money, Money."



Money, Money
from the Musical CABARET
Words by Fred Ebb
Music by John Kander

Sexuality and the Musical: The Threesome Acknowledged

As discussed in detail in the last chapter, varying amounts of homosociality and homoeroticism have long frequented musical narratives. Both *Camelot* and *Paint Your Wagon* take this a step further, blurring the line between a homosocial and homoerotic male relationship. Possibilities suggested by the earlier films become realities in *Cabaret*. While Lancelot, Arthur, Ben, and Pardner are all narratively heterosexual, the same cannot be said for Brian or Max. The film brings out the homosexuality of Isherwood's original character.[46] Isherwood, however, apparently disliked the film's treatment of homosexuality, particularly in the case of Brian

[46]A wealth scholarship on Christopher Isherwood and queer sensibilities exists. See in particular Jaime M. Carr, "Queer Times: Christopher Isherwood's Modernity," Dissertation, University of Rhode Island, 2004 and the subsequent book *Queer Times: Christopher Isherwood's Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2006) for a discussion of Isherwood and how he deals with homosexuality, fascism, and modernity in his fiction and James J. Berg and Chris Freeman, eds. *The Isherwood Century: Essays on the Life and Work of Christopher Isherwood* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2001). See also Christopher Isherwood, *The Berlin Stories. The Last of Mr. Norris. Goodbye to Berlin* (New York: James Laughlin, 1945).

Roberts. In one interview, he states, "what I don't like is teasing the audience – equivocating and trying to make something a little bit naughty."[47] Knapp asserts that "the shift was partly historical: by the early 1970s, homosexuality had become a hotter political issue than either civil rights or the 1960s-era sexual revolution."[48] As I discuss in the preceding section, the film makes it quite clear that Brian is rarely sexually attracted to women. His physical relationship with Sally is an anomaly. Of course, even in decadent early thirties Berlin, Brian is hesitant to openly admit his attraction to men. Yet his bisexuality soon comes out in the open. When Sally first meets Max, Brian's jealousy is clear; he resents her flirtation with the wealthy baron. Yet as Max's attentions towards Brian become more pronounced, he softens. His jealousy perhaps stemmed not only from Sally's attention to Max but that Max was not attracted to him as well. However, Max soon makes it clear that he wants both members of the couple. And when Sally and Brian both admit to having slept with Max, the bisexuality of both men is admitted though still only suggested visually through significant looks and apparent intimacy.

Despite all three sharing a physical relationship with one another, the film does not allow for any open acknowledgement that the threesome has had sex. In part, the surprise that Sally and Brian both register after admitting that they have slept with Max separately strongly indicates that they had not entered into an explicit sexual situation involving all three members of the love triangle. One scene in particular is even more telling. During the weekend at Max's manor, Brian gets drunk while Sally dances for the two men. As the scene progresses, Sally and Max begin dancing while the inebriated Brian wanders around the room. He places himself behind a fern and makes a crack about being the "king of the jungle," trying to highlight his virility while his two companions dance together. Max then pulls in Brian to dance with them,

[47]Qtd. in Carr, "Queer Times" Dissertation, 201.
[48]Knapp, *National Identity*, 240.

and the threesome whirls around (Figure 5.11). The camera cuts into close-ups of their faces, and the sexual tension is palpable. This is as far as it goes, however. Stephen Farber found this lack of follow-through disappointing, claiming that "had we seen York abandoning himself to voluptuous living, experimenting sexually with some of Sally's curiosity, his confusion and ambivalence might have helped to bring the period alive."[49] The film does not even go so far as to imply that the closeness turns into a sexual encounter, rather the tension simply dissipates. After they look longingly at one another, their faces come apart. Max and Sally deposit an exceedingly drunk and stumbling Brian onto the couch. Max simply looks at Sally then walks away. She eventually follows upstairs. It remains unclear whether Max and Sally will engage in sexual relations this night, but the truly erotic moment between the three of them has passed.

Figure 5.11. Threesome Unrealized. Screen Capture.

In a post-Stonewall United States, Hollywood's *Cabaret* can carefully depict homosexuality. While the gay rights movement had made many strides, much still needed to be done. Within this socio-cultural context, the film version of *Cabaret* could be more open than its stage counterpart. Yet the film was not as progressive as many critics and scholars would have liked. Furthermore, its treatment of alternative sex carries a great deal of ambivalence. James Leve claims that the film is "both an endorsement and condemnation of sexual deviance."[50]

[49]Farber, "*Cabaret* May Shock Kansas."
[50]Leve, 71.

Unlike Cliff, Brian is explicitly bisexual, even engaging in sex with a man in the narrative. However, this relationship is merely talked about, not shown. The film shows Sally and Brian in bed together but passes over their sexual encounters with Max. And the film carefully avoids the one opportunity to depict another alternative to heterosexual sex in the form of a *ménage a trois*. Non-normative relationships it seems can be discussed but not shown in the context of this film. Despite the shortcomings in terms of social progressiveness, *Cabaret* does go farther than previous film musicals in its handling of the unconventional, eroticized love triangle.

The film explores sexuality not only narratively but through the depiction of gender ambiguities and use of camp. Camp was an important part of Isherwood's own writings. Dennis Denisoff asserts that Isherwood "finds camp (as he defines it) more effective as a strategy of inclusion… because camp does not distance the performers from the audience, but aims to invoke a sympathy between the two groups in order to form a single community."[51] Therefore, its use in the adaptation of his stories adheres to the spirit of Isherwood's work. This aspect of Liza Minnelli's performance will be discussed in the next section. However, I will look briefly at Joel Grey as the Emcee here. Several scholars have commented on the highly ambiguous character of the Emcee and Grey's brilliant camp performance in the film. Mitchell Morris asserts that the Emcee is the "center of sexual trouble in this musical."[52] He wears deliberately garish make-up throughout and enacts exaggerated sexual humor coupled with disturbing insight to the vagaries around him (Figure 5.12a).[53] He also dresses in drag for one number and performs

[51]Dennis Denisoff, "Camp, Aesthetics, and Cultural Inclusiveness in Isherwood's *Berlin Stories*," in *Performing Gender and Comedy: Theories, Texts, and Contexts*, ed. Shannon Hengen (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1998), 86.

[52]Mitchell Morris, "*Cabaret*, America's Weimar, and Mythologies of the Gay Subject," *American Music* 22:1 (Spring 2004), 152.

[53]See Rebecca Louise Bell-Metereau, "Cross-Dressing and Sex Role Reversals in American Film," (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1981). Chapter Four deals with post-1960. Bell-Metereau explores the transition from the demonization to the humanization of the transvestite and cross-dressing and camp, among other things in a number

the campy yet highly disconcerting song, "If You Could See Her" (Figure 5.12b and 5.12c). The femininity that Grey performs causes a specific type of sexual threat. Linda Mizejewski asserts that "both female sexuality and gay sexuality function as the same term of difference."[54] As such, the film reveals an equal amount of ambivalence towards feminism and gay rights. James Leve discusses the use of camp in the musical in great detail, stating that "the Kit Kat Klub scenes in *Cabaret* fulfill the traditional function of camp by undermining expectations of respectability through parodic humor. The emcee performs sexual deviance."[55] His over-the-top performance and appearance embodies a camp aesthetic that becomes politicized in the context of the film. In 1972, the overtly queer Emcee might be seen as an emblem of openly gay identity that is treated in a highly equivocal fashion. As numerous scholars and critics have noted, the film somehow both endorses and condemns the portrayal of sexual deviance, not entirely separating it from associations with fascism.

of films from the period. Thus, the Emcee can be seen as connecting with a long tradition of cross-dressing in film and intersecting with common meanings.

[54]Mizejewski, 212.

[55]Leve, 45.

Figure 5.12. The Emcee: *a*, Disturbing Insight Couple with Make-up; *b*, Drag Number; *c*, "If You Could See Her." Screen Captures.

Feminism, Divahood, and Crossing Boundaries

As I have explored throughout this dissertation, the women's rights movement had been a force since the early part of the 1960s. As the movement grew and progressed or hit obstacles, many films, whether subtly or obviously, addressed the changes being wrought in some way. By 1973, feminism was becoming institutionalized. In 1970, San Diego State University offered the first Women's Studies program in the United States. The department's website connects this development to the myriad social changes happening in the sixties and seventies, stating "in the late 1960s, the student community of San Diego State University became very much involved in the social movements of that era. New academic departments emerged from the demands of cultural causes. Africana Studies, Chicana and Chicano Studies, and Native American Studies all emerged within a short time. In the midst of these upheavals, the Women's Studies Program was

born."[56] New programs were popping up, and women and feminist theory increasingly became a significant subject of academic inquiry. In this atmosphere, Liza Minnelli's Sally Bowles came into being.

At the heart of the film incarnation of Sally Bowles is Liza Minnelli's performance. Scholars discuss her influences, camp aesthetic, and gender ambiguity. For instance, Ralph Willett observes that "Minnelli is a brash singer, gauche dancer, and intense performer, and like Streisand, she is an ambiguous figure, linked in the musical as much to male as to female sexuality."[57] Multiple scholars point to the similarities between Minnelli's Sally and Marlene Dietrich as well as her mother Judy Garland, in what Knapp calls a "campy parody."[58] Morris claims that "Minnelli is also playing Judy Garland," which "marked her ascent to the status gay diva."[59] Not only do Minnelli's physical similarities to her mother but the neediness she displays in her character and references to "pills and liquor" take on poignant meaning. In her fascinating look at all of the incarnations of Sally Bowles, Linda Mizejewski considers spectacle, spectatorship, and gender identity in the film's version of Sally. She points to Minnelli's identification with Dietrich and her mother, heavy, garish make-up, and over-the-top costumes as implying drag. She observes that "Sally Bowles is much more directly aligned with the emcee and his ambiguous gender."[60] Songs like the striking and powerfully performed "Money, Money" bring out this association.

In the film, Sally navigates the separated worlds of the Kit Kat Klub and the "real" world of Berlin. In the stage version, where songs are performed both in the club and as part of the

[56] http://womensstudies.sdsu.edu/history.htm, Accessed November 7, 2013.

[57]Ralph Willett, "From Gold Diggers to Bar Girls: A Selective History of the American Movie Musical," in *Approaches to the American Musical*, ed. Robert Lawson-Peebles (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1996), 53.

[58]Knapp, *National Identity*, 240.

[59]Morris, 151 and 152.

[60]Mizejewski, 214.

narrative, all of the main characters sing in a manner typical of musicals. In the film, however, only Sally both sings and participates in the narrative events. Therefore, Sally alone enters into the musical realm and separate performing world of the Kit Kat Klub. In her nightclub songs, she is in her "musically enhanced" mode.[61] Yet she does not leave it in the club; Sally brings her heightened emotionality and stage persona into her everyday life, which makes her stand out from the other characters. Sally interacts with people through an incredibly constructed persona, which is readily apparent in the clothing and make-up she wears. Even in her everyday life, Sally often wears bright green eye shadow with dramatic mascara and eye liner, red lipstick, and paints her nails green. She also has a scripted description of herself, which she at first tells Brian before he penetrates through her façade and later relates to someone at Max's dinner party. She enjoys shocking people for the sake of it and as a defense mechanism. Early in their relationship, she asks Brian, "Do I shock you darling?" When he answers no, she looks disappointed and exclaims "I don't?!" Sally is constantly acting and only with Brian does she ever truly let her guard down and the persona slip.

In short, Sally is both of the world and outside of it. Furthermore, Sally has the ability to directly comment on her own life due to the function of the Kit Kat Klub songs. "Mein Herr," "Maybe This Time," "Money, Money," and "Cabaret" can all be seen as referring to aspects of Sally's life throughout the film. This unique ability gives Sally a certain amount of self-awareness. In her musically enhanced mode, she seems to understand more regarding certain aspects of the unfolding events – at least in her own, personal life.

[61]I am drawing here in part from what Knapp calls "Musically Enhanced Reality Mode" (or "MERM"), in which a film gradually moves from a cinematic realism to musical numbers "which permitted both audio and visual violations of what might actually be possible" (*Personal Identity*, 67). As used by Knapp this, of course, applies to the Kit Kat Klub numbers but also the ways in which the performers fit into their performing environment. And it is this related notion of "musically enhanced" mode of Sally Bowles/Liza Minelli that I am drawing on here.

The Sally of the stage version is untalented, deluded about her abilities and the reasons that she obtained her nightclub job. In a fit of anger, Cliff baldly asks "When are you going to realize, the only way you got this job is by sleeping with somebody?!"[62] Sally, played by Jill Haworth, is not an accomplished singer – an element of the character that Hal Prince insisted on but that critics disliked.[63] Minnelli, however, shines in the musical numbers. As if needing to justify why someone so talented is working in a seedy nightclub in Berlin, Sally at one point claims "I know I'm a good singer but I really want to be an actress." This statement implies that while she electrifies in her musical numbers, she may not have much in the way of acting talent. Minnelli's considerable vocal talent and stage presence, however, serves to further set her apart from Brian and the other characters that she interacts with in her life. In one interpretation, Sally's ability to cross worlds might be seen as feminist in and of itself. She alone can participate in both the "realistic" and "unrealistic" modes of expression, displaying a wider range than any other character. In a certain way, she "has it all." Yet there is another convincing way of looking at Sally's character.

For much of the film, Sally is an explicitly liminal figure; she is poised in a moment of transition from one world to another. Unlike the Master of Ceremonies and other nightclub girls, she does not solely exist in the film as an entity from the world of the Kit Kat Klub. Therefore, she is not simply a member of the Greek chorus like the Emcee. While he passively observes then comments on the goings-on of Sally and her consorts as well as the increasingly disturbing situation in Berlin, Sally actively participates. In fact, the film might be seen as a sort of ritual in which Sally seems to be transitioning from her hedonistic, unrealistic life to a traditional domesticated existence. From the time she meets Brian, she enters that transitional space –

[62]John Kander, et al. *Cabaret* (New York: Random House, 1967), 102.
[63]See Block, "Is Life a Cabaret?," 168.

neither in one world or another but moving fluidly between them. This status gives Sally a certain amount of license. She is free to show more sincerity in her Kit Kat Klub performances, shown clearly in "Maybe This Time." And as mentioned above, she also brings her dramatic nature into the "real" world full of "realistic" interactions with Brian and other characters. In this sense, Sally's liminal state might be seen as reflecting the status of women and women's rights in the early seventies. The sixties and seventies were a time of transition as women fought for numerous rights, including in the workplace. While many women stayed in the traditional roles as housewife and mother, others strove for independence and a place in the corporate world. Stacy Wolf identifies Sally, along with Charity, as the typical 1960s Single Girl. In reference to the stage version, Wolf declares that "*Cabaret* conflates the personal – Sally's resistance to becoming an American housewife – and the political – her blithe attitude towards the Nazis, so that Single Girl femininity stands in for amorality."[64] As I mentioned above, Sally's ability to travel through both worlds or modes of expression represents a woman's newfound capability to do the same in their own lives. Yet she may also represent the woman in a state of flux, unable or unwilling to occupy either space fully.

Of course, Sally cannot remain in this transitional space indefinitely. She must choose. For a time, Sally and Brian look forward to settling down and having a baby together (Brian overlooks the fact that the baby may or may not be his biologically). In both versions of the musical, Sally has an abortion without telling her partner. As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, a very heated national debate about abortion surrounding the *Roe v. Wade* case was occurring during the time of the film. As such, Sally's decision had highly topical associations and entered into the argument. Sally retreats from the traditional life laid out before her. Rather

[64]Wolf, *Changed for Good*, 69.

than progressing through her liminal state to a stable one, Sally returns to her old way of being in the world – the world of the Kit Kat Klub. In the film, she explicitly acknowledges this move. In a moment of supreme self-awareness, she says to Brian, "I'm self-centered, inconsiderate…and I have this infantile fantasy that I'll amount to something as an actress." She then goes on to relate her worries that their conventional life together would fall apart. She fears that she could not be content to be a wife and mother, would resent Brian, and ultimately cheat on him and abandon their family. Stephen Farber laments the fact that the film pits career and family against one another. He asserts that "the film fails to accept the challenge of a truly liberated heroine."[65] This view posits Sally as a woman poised to "have it all" but backing away in a disappointing manner. For Farber, Sally has the potential to be a certain kind of feminist; she is not then in a liminal state between career/musical expression and family/realism but can conceivably inhabit both worlds.

It is perhaps the failure of the film, or I would argue part of its complexity, that the character of Sally enters the discourse of feminism in such an ambivalent way. One can read her character development and her ability to navigate multiple spaces in various ways. Similarly, her separation from and simultaneous involvement in both the Kit Kat Klub and the "real" world sets up an ambiguous position for women. The film does not provide solutions for the issues surrounding the place of women or seem to either strongly condemn or praise Sally's ultimate choice to remain an actress (although it clearly condemns her lack of political conviction). Similar to its predecessor *Paint Your Wagon* and other musicals from around this five year period, *Cabaret* reveals a deeply ambivalent and highly complicated relationship with second-wave feminism.

[65]Farber, "*Cabaret* May Shock Kansas."

Nazi Rise to Power

Like *The Sound of Music*, *Cabaret* depicts the end of the interwar years and the Nazis rise to power. Unlike *The Sound of Music*, *Cabaret* does not end in an uplifting manner with a traditional nuclear family struggling against the oppressive political party. *Cabaret* instead takes a bleaker look at the rise of the Nazis, examining the complacency and decadence that aided their ability to take hold – or at least did nothing to stop them. Among the myriad changes made for the film include the treatment of this bit of socio-political commentary. I will examine these changes in this section, looking in particular at the removal of the character Ernst, the addition of the German baron Maximillian, the song "Tomorrow Belongs to Me," the differences between the two secondary romances, Cliff versus Brian, and the roles of both Sally and the Kit Kat Klub.

The film eliminates Ernst, who is the first person that Cliff meets upon his imminent arrival in Berlin and a member of the Nazi party. The two friends meet when Ernst uses Cliff to get an illegal briefcase into the city. He later convinces Cliff to smuggle the briefcase between countries in order to make money, enlisting his incredulous friend in an errand that has a purpose with which he does not agree. While the audience never discovers the contents of the briefcase that periodically travels between Paris and Berlin, it becomes clear later in the show that it is related to the Nazi agenda. Towards the end of Act I, in scene 12, Ernst arrives late at the engagement party for Fraulein Schneider and Herr Schultz. His political affiliations, hinted at before, become explicit. Fritz wears a coat with the swastika armband, causing Cliff to balk. Cliff plainly tells Ernst his impressions from *Mein Kampf*, exclaiming "the man is out of his mind. It's right there on every page."[66] Ernst, however, brushes Cliff aside and says tht he could never understand because he is not German. Ernst then demonstrates the rampant anti-Semitism

[66]Kander, et al., 77.

of the Nazi party, foreshadowing the consequences of their takeover. After Herr Schultz sings "Meeskite" when drunk at his own engagement party, Fritz initiates this exchange:

> Ernst: (to Schneider): This marriage is not advisable. I cannot put it too strongly. For your own welfare.
>
> Cliff: What about Herr Schultz's welfare?
>
> E: He is not a German.
>
> Schneider: But he was born here!
>
> E: He is not a German.[67]

Without the character of Ernst, the film lacks a major character that has Nazi leanings. Fraulein Schneider realizes that "one can no longer dismiss the Nazis. Because suddenly they are my friends and neighbors."[68] This sense that anyone could be a Nazi and the widespread popularity of the party infiltrating people's lives get lost. In the film, the Nazis are more abstract – a gang of nameless men that wreak havoc on the city.

The film adds the wealthy aristocrat Baron Maximillian von Heune as not only a love interest for Sally and Brian but a representative of the type of German complacency that the film condemns. Max believes that he and other influential Germans can control the Nazi party, using them to promote German nationalism without letting them gain any true political power. The film presents this view as untenable from the outset. Max's outlook comes on the heels of several shots that depict the negative effects of the Nazi rise (Figure 5.13). After the incident in the biergarten (described below), Brian looks ironically at Max and asks "You still think you can control them?" Max simply shrugs but this will be the last time he appears in the film. It soon becomes clear that he leaves Berlin and fails to take Sally and Brian with him as promised. Max

[67]Ibid., 82.
[68]Ibid., 89.

symbolizes then a type of German as posited by the film who remains caught up in a decadent lifestyle and lazily allows the Third Reich to come to power. He underestimates the Nazi party while seeking to exploit their passion for his own nationalistic purposes. The film implies that people like Max, with their wealth and aristocratic influence, might have attempted to use their assets to prevent the rise of the Nazis. But the selfish negligence displayed by Max let the atrocities occur. Once Max realizes the seriousness of the situation, it is too late and he simply leaves.

Figure 5.13. The Rise of the Nazis. Screen Capture.

The change in context for the anthem "Tomorrow Belongs to Me" also becomes more symbolic and abstract. In the stage show, "Tomorrow Belongs to Me" is sung twice. The waiters at the Kit Kat Klub first sing the song after Herr Schultz boldly enters Fraulein Schneider's room. The song here serves to show the spread of the Nazi version of German ideals and foreshadow the tragic separation of Schultz and Schneider later in the show. The second appearance of "Tomorrow Belongs to Me" occurs during the engagement party. Fraulein Kost sings the song to show her support for Ernst and his party. Eventually the other guests, all but Schneider, Schultz, Cliff, and Sally, join in. The stage directions indicate that their voices grow "louder and louder, even rather frightening."[69] The placement of the song here helps to

[69]Kander, et al., 83.

precipitate Schneider's decision to break off the engagement as well as further depicting the infiltration of the Nazi party. Friends of the characters sing this song, and the implications are all that much more disturbing. In the film, "Tomorrow Belongs to Me" occurs while Max and Brian are enjoying a drink in a biergarten. An anonymous, blond Aryan-looking youth begins singing in a clear tenor voice. His song quiets the noisy outdoor venue and an off-screen accordion begins to accompany him. The camera moves between shots of the boy's euphoric face and the positive reactions of the crowd (Figure 5.14). As it cuts back to the singing boy, the camera pans down to reveal a Nazi uniform. Slowly, the audience joins him, first other young men and a teenage girl before most of the assembly rises and sings. As more people join, the initial singer becomes more forceful and passionate, nearly shouting as he is joined by other strong voices. The camera cuts to show an old man who remains seated and looks quite perturbed at this turn of events. Brian and Max simply leave, uncomfortable with the show of political fervor. The impromptu impassioned singing of "Tomorrow Belongs to Me" is certainly chilling but enacted by a nameless crowd and loses the more specific meaning attached to it in the stage show.

Figure 5.14. "Tomorrow Belongs to Me:" *a,* Hitler Youth Sings; *b,* Members of Crowd Join; *c,* Collective Fervor; *d,* Worried Old Man. Screen Captures.

The film changes the secondary couple from a middle-aged interreligious couple to a young, attractive Jewish couple. In the stage production, Herr Schultz and Fraulein Schneider have a not-too-chaste relationship that leads to a whirlwind proposal and engagement. The songs "It Couldn't Please Me More" and "Married" chronicle their developing feelings and delight in finding a companion after so many years alone. However, after the scene described above between Ernst and Fraulein Schneider, the pragmatic aging widow breaks off her engagement with the Jewish shopkeeper in order to preserve her own safety and well-being. The film eliminates Schultz's character and reduces Schneider to the extremely minor role of landlady. Instead, a romance occurs between two new characters, Fritz and Natalia. In keeping with the split aesthetic of the film, the pair never sing separately or together.

Fritz replaces the Nazi Ernst as a friend of the primary couple who takes English lessons with Brian. Early on he is revealed to be opportunistic. Fritz intends to seduce Natalia due to her family money and later admits that he hid his Jewish heritage upon arriving in order to make his

way unencumbered by prejudice. Natalia, on the other hand, is wealthy, well-mannered, naïve, and a devout Jew. Until he reveals that he is Jewish, the heiress refuses to marry Fritz (who has fallen in love with her in earnest). After much angst, the couple does marry under a c*huppah* with Sally and Brian in attendance. Unlike the couple from the stage version, Fritz and Natalia not only consummate their love but actually marry. In the context of their love story, the young lovers get their happy ending. However, considering the political climate depicted in the film, their story is a tragic one. While prejudice does not ultimately affect their relationship status, the growing violence towards Jews and oncoming Holocaust certainly looms over them. In an earlier scene, Natalia and her family have already been decried as Jews when a group of boys in uniform chant "Juden" as they deface their walkway with the same word in red and kill Natalia's beloved dog, leaving it on her doorstep. This situation will most certainly become worse as the couple embark on their new lives together. Thus, the tragedy of the Holocaust haunts Fritz and Natalia's wedding despite the apparent "happy ending."

The film strikingly changes one of the main characters and Sally's love interest in a way that also alters his relationship with Berlin and attitude towards the Nazis. The American Clifford Bradshaw morphs into the British Brian Roberts. For much of the show, Cliff actively looks the other way at the depravity around him. His song "Why Should I Wake Up?" gives musical voice to the apathy and carefree attitude that Cliff adopts during his sojourn in Berlin. Rather than working on his book, he parties with Sally. In order to pay their rent, Cliff smuggles for Ernst without asking what it is for or what is in the mysterious briefcase. Yet Cliff reads *Mein Kampf* and actively declares his distaste for Hitler and his policies. And it is Cliff's inability to simply standby anymore that drives him away from Berlin. Cliff's nationality in the stage version is symbolic as well. He is an American that is at first complicit in the behaviors and

complacency of Sally and the Berliners. However, his convictions ultimately cause Cliff to condemn the Nazis and leave Germany. Brian, on the other hand, is British. Therefore, his somewhat guilty contentment turned indignation do not have the same resonance with a view of America's handling of the rise of the Nazis and World War II. Although Brian certainly gets sucked into Sally's world, the active choice of decadence and willful ignorance clear in the characterization of Cliff are not emphasized in the film. Similar to his stage source, however, Brian does aggressively object to the Nazis, even arguing with the smug Maximillian about their danger. In one telling scene, Brian, in a bout of frustration and anger, attacks a Nazi flag and ends up getting beaten by two party members. Again, since the Nazis themselves are not named characters, Brian's opposition of the party and what they stand for appears much more abstract in the film. Brian is both less negligent and less overtly political than his stage counterpart while still being against the Nazi party.

Despite Sally's ability to navigate the two worlds of the film and the resulting insight into her own life, she appears entirely ignorant of the socio-political situation around her. She displays this same type of ignorance in both the stage and film version. In the original script, however, her obliviousness is framed as willful. When she discovers *Mein Kampf* on Cliff's writing table, he tells her "I thought I should know *something* about German politics," to which Sally responds "Why? You're an American!"[70] This brief exchange reveals Sally's opinion that German politics have nothing to do with her or other non-Germans. When the engagement party guests all sing "Tomorrow Belongs to Me," Sally remains "unaware of what is happening."[71] Furthermore, she refuses to understand why Cliff stops smuggling for Ernst and why he wants to leave the increasingly dangerous city. Throughout the stage show, she lives in the same bubble

[70]Kander, et al., 37
[71]Ibid., 84

of determined ignorance that Cliff enters without breaking away from it as he does. In the film, Sally seems even more clueless. She does not perform in any of the numbers that comment on the larger socio-political situation, only those which pertain to her own narrative. It is this unawareness that causes Mizejewski to state that Sally is simply the "pseudo-center of the film" because the "narrative authority belongs not to her…but rather the Kit Kat Klub musical numbers."[72] Furthermore, she remains oblivious to Max's political ideas and is not even present during the impromptu performance of "Tomorrow Belongs to Me" at the biergarten. While the stage version of Sally Bowles is British, the film makes her American. Mizejewski notes that "the Americanization of Sally Bowles was not Fosse's idea but originates in Jay Allen Presson's 1970 screenplay."[73] This altered nationality also changes the commentary as it implies even more responsibility in the American refusal to get involved as the Nazis rise to power and the atrocities begin.

Finally, the members of the Kit Kat Klub both act as a sort of Greek chorus while representing the hedonism that the film aligns with the allowed Nazi advancement. Several scenes underline this dual purpose. Towards the beginning of the film (at about seventeen minutes), Brian and Fritz are enjoying a night out at the Kit Kat Klub. As Fritz complains about how the communists and Nazis are ruining business, the floorshow consists of two girls mud-wrestling. At first, Fritz's complaints are intercut with the beginning of the wrestling and Brian is clearly enjoying the antics. However, quick cuts soon show an increasingly dirty and violent wrestling match mixed with close-ups of the audience's hysterical, almost obscene laughter (Figure 5.15). Brian's distaste becomes apparent at the extremity of the scene. The proprietor throws out a uniformed Nazi, kicking him off the front step. As the show ends, the Emcee swipes

[72]Mizejewski, 209.
[73]Ibid., 202.

a bit of mud across his lip and mockingly raises his hand in the salute to Hitler (Figure 5.15b). Just a few minutes later, the Nazi returns for revenge with several of his friends. They violently beat the older man, which is edited against a pseudo-traditional German dance with fake slaps and performed in lederhosen and caps with feathers (Figure 5.10). The editing and various angles and shot lengths used makes the scene incredibly frantic, creating an uncomfortable parallel between the debauched antics at the Kit Kat Klub and the vicious beating. Mizejewski goes farther to implicate Sally in this association as her pleasurable shout as a train passes by directly precedes this scene. She claims that the scene is then "situated as Sally's unconscious, the underside of her thrill, a particularly sadomasochistic pleasure."[74] Similarly, the Kit Kat Klub girls with the Emcee in drag mock the Nazis while a group terrorizes Natalia's home (Figure 5.16). These types of scenes abound, and the associative montage makes clear that despite the Greek chorus function of the Kit Kat Klub numbers, and particularly the Master of Ceremonies character, the nightclub does not quite stand fully apart but even shares some of the blame.

[74]Mizejewski, 209.

Figure 5.15. Mud Wrestling: *a*, Girls in Mud; *b*, Emcee Sprays Water; *c*, Enthused Reactions; *d*, Emcee's "Mustache." Screen Captures.

Figure 5.16. Shots from Natalia/Drag Montage: *a*, Antics in Drag; *b*, Natalia Targeted. Screen Captures.

Both the stage and film versions have very clear socio-political messages, though the differences between the two reflect different emphases and nuances. In *The American Musical and the Formation of National Identity*, Raymond Knapp explores the relationship between the rise of the Nazis and a "decadent, bad, urban, unnatural *victimizing* chaotic piece of Europe."[75] Using evidence from both the stage show and the film, Knapp explores the issues of homosexual representation and the rise of the Nazis within the context of the decadence as embodied in the

[75]Knapp, *National Identity*, 229.

Kit Kat Klub – which he aligns with racial tensions in America, pointing to the shared initials with the Ku Klux Klan. He astutely discusses the confusion inherent in *Cabaret* as it both invites condemnation and enjoyment of the decadence depicted. Though through the character of Cliff/Brian, the audience is presented with a moral compass. As Knapp says, "while it may be true that a world grown decadent gives a place to both [Brian's] sexual explorations and the rise of Nazis, we are allowed through him to preserve the capacity to distinguish between sexual license and evil."[76]

Conclusion: Intertextuality and Legacy

Upon its release in 1972, the film was already rife with intertextual meaning and potentials. Like so many film musicals, including *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music*, the film version of *Cabaret* is an adaptation of an adaptation. The stage show, with a book written by Joe Masterson, loosely adapted Christopher Isherwood's *The Berlin Stories* into a musical play. Furthermore, Isherwood's stories had already been used for the play *I Am a Camera* (1952) by John van Druten, which also received a film treatment in 1955. For those familiar with the original stories, the straight play, the play's adaptation, and/or the stage musical, the film *Cabaret* entered into a rich arena of interpretation. Knapp asserts that the background of "selective adaptation" surrounding Isherwood's "narrative fragments" allowed Fosse and Jay Presson Allen "to move in a slightly different direction in the film, bringing the focus more to bear directly on the narrator's homosexuality, an aspect of Isherwood's original stories that had until then remained semi-closeted."[77] Furthermore, Allen inserts the secondary love story involving Natalia Landauer and Fritz Wendel from Van Druten's play in place of the romance between Fraulein Schneider and Herr Schultz. By drawing from versions other than its presumed

[76]Ibid., 243.
[77]Knapp, *National Identity*, 240.

source (the stage production of *Cabaret*), Fosse's film maintains a dialogue between all of the various adaptations and informs earlier ones. For example, explicitly referring to Brian's homosexuality (or at least bisexuality) might bring out this aspect of Cliff's character in the interpretation of the actors or the way the audience views him. Thus, the adaptation of *Cabaret* adds to a richly intertextual tapestry woven from threads of Isherwood's stories that inform and reflect upon one another.

In many ways, the film is a star vehicle for Liza Minnelli, and as such, the star text associated with the actress becomes key. First and foremost, Minnelli is the daughter of film musical legend Judy Garland. Therefore, many viewers read Minnelli's performances through the lens of her mother. Indeed, scholars have noted how the singer-actress channels aspects of her mother in performance. Both Raymond Knapp and James Leve observe that Minnelli draws on Judy Garland and Marlene Dietrich, among others, for her performance. The relationship and the similarities would not be lost on the musical loving portion of the audience. This aspect of Minnelli's performance might be read as camp, as Leve does, or add a poignant edge to the character of Sally Bowles depending on one's point of view. Furthermore, Minnelli's own career as a nightclub singer would certainly impact how the audience viewed her performance of a struggling nightclub singer. As noted earlier in this chapter, Minnelli had been singing songs that would appear in the film for years before it was made. Therefore, her performances of the songs "Maybe This Time" and "Cabaret" could easily be seen as filmed performances of Liza Minnelli's stage act just as much as numbers sung by Sally Bowles. The complex relationship between Minnelli as nightclub performer and her character in *Cabaret* has the potential either to take knowing viewers out of the world of the film or add another layer to the musical performance and character.

Of course, *Cabaret* also has a much more linear relationship with the stage musical. Despite its more complicated relationship with the multiple versions and star text, many viewers simply consider the film an adaptation of a Broadway musical by Kander and Ebb. Critics and scholars, myself included, consistently point out the myriad differences in the film from the stage version. This relationship gains even more prominence through the years as later productions use elements from the film. Notably, Sam Mendes's much talked about Broadway revival in 1998 interpolated songs from the film, including "Mein Herr," "Maybe This Time," and the film version of "Money." Starring Alan Cumming as a raunchy Emcee and Natasha Richardson as a less-than-talented Sally Bowles, the revival was an enormous success. It was nominated for ten Tony Awards and won four, including Best Revival of a Musical, Best Actor in a Musical for Cumming, and Best Actress in a Musical for Richardson. The revival was also extremely popular, running for 2,377 performances. *New York Times* critic Vincent Canby had glowing things to say about both Cumming and Richardson. He states of the production as a whole that the 1998 musical is "technically a revival, but it generates the excitement of something brand-new."[78] With this statement, Canby hits on the magic of *Cabaret* and more broadly, the adaptations of Isherwood's stories. With each incarnation, the adapters, both writers and directors, create something truly new and different, interpreting the original works in various ways. *Cabaret* then epitomizes the essence of adaptation, creating a new work from a familiar one.

Though Fosse's film is the most widely available and well-known version, it is by no means a static product. As Mendes's production illustrates, the film can continue to be part of a dialogue as it influences subsequent productions. Furthermore, it continues to gather associations

[78]Vincent Canby, "At the Heart of a Spellbinding 'Cabaret,' a Star: SUNDAY VIEW A Revived 'Cabaret' That Feels Brand-New," New York Times (1923-Current file) [New York, N.Y] 29 Mar 1998: AR7.

as a product that moves through time and gains new audiences. As with so many of the actors and other people discussed in this dissertation, those involved went on to enjoy long and successful careers. Although he died in 1987, Bob Fosse nevertheless engaged in a great deal of creative work after *Cabaret*, directing the Broadway musicals *Pippin* (1972) and *Chicago* (1975) as well as the 1979 film *All That Jazz*. As of this writing, Minnelli and York are still alive and working, despite various ups and downs in their lives and careers. From the sci-fi film *Logan's Run* (1976) to the Austin Powers movies in the late-1990s and early-2000s, York has enjoyed a long and varied career. Minnelli too has continued to tour singing and appear in television shows such as *Arrested Development* (2003-13). Their later work, and in the case of Fosse and Minnelli especially, highly publicized personal lives, informs current viewings of the film. As such, *Cabaret* is not a fixed text but a living work that continues to accumulate new meanings.

Even with the fluidity and multiple interpretations that *Cabaret* allows, the film adaptation connects strongly with the moment of its release. More than any other film discussed in this dissertation, the 1972 *Cabaret* is deeply ambivalent towards politics, society, love, sex, and gender. Of course, some of the ambivalence comes from the stage version. However, the film highlights this sense, sharpening some of the commentary while downplaying other elements. In particular, Brian's bisexuality and Liza Minelli's performance of the brash yet vulnerable Sally emphasize ambiguity and suggest a new direction for the musical as genre. The decision to cut the book numbers, separating the Kit Kat Klub songs and the narrative action, further indicates expanded possibilities. The result is a powerful and complex film that provides a window into the 1970s film musical.

CONCLUSION

Coda

In the title of this dissertation, I take 1960-1975 as my period of study yet my final case study premiered in 1972. However, I find 1975 a fitting end point as the now cult classic *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* came out in that year.[1] Though beyond the scope of this dissertation – *Rocky Horror* is based on a British musical and only had a short run on Broadway in anticipation of the film's release – this film musical pokes fun at the musical as genre as well as other film genres. References to sci-fi and horror movies engage with film history in fascinating and humorous ways. The film also absolutely cements the end of the Code. *Rocky Horror* not only openly flouts convention and modesty, but also pokes fun at conventional notions of sex and gender. Tim Curry gives a stunning, deliciously campy performance as Frankenfurter – a highly sexualized transvestite who corrupts the innocent lovers Brad and Janet, played by Barry Bostwick and Susan Sarandon respectively. Unlike the still ambiguous depiction in *Cabaret*, the exploration of sexual identity is emphasized in this film. Furthermore, screenings of the film have become a participatory experience. *Rocky Horror* draws on the embodied experience inherent in all musicals as "viewers" dance, sing, throw objects, and talk back to the characters. As such, it provides an appropriate close to the trajectory identified and outlined in this dissertation.

[1]There is a wealth of scholarship on this musical. See in particular Raymond Knapp, *The American Musical and the Performance of Personal Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Scott Michaels and David Evans, *Rocky Horror: From Concept to Cult* (London: Sanctuary Publishing, 2002); Sal Piro, *"Creatures of the Night": The Rocky Horror Picture Show Experience* (Redford, MO: Stable Press, 1990); and Jim Whittaker, *Cosmic Light: The Birth of a Cult Classic* (Altoona, PA: Acme Books, 1998).

Themes and Possibilities

Several themes weave their way through this dissertation, including politics, ideas of sexuality and expression, and feminism. While civil rights is one of the most important and well-known movements of the time period, the musicals discussed rarely directly engage with the sticky issues of race and ethnicity. And this absence is telling. It brings up questions regarding both the filmmakers and audience of the musical genre, and a particular and disturbing view of a white United States. Richard Dyer's work on the musical as a white space in which he analyzes the marginalization of black performers and the privileging of whites still has resonance during this time period.[2] Feminism, on the other hand, has proven to be a major thread. Musicals through the 1960s and into the early seventies react to the prominent movement in different ways. A tension between a socially conservative reactionary impulse and a full embrace emerges. While Maria in *The Sound of Music* ultimately marries and settles into the traditional role of wife and mother, her vitality and agency infuse the film so thoroughly that the ending seems forced and false to many viewers. *Paint Your Wagon* and *Cabaret* display a marked ambivalence towards feminism to an even greater degree. Elizabeth in *Paint Your Wagon* is both the actual property of her husbands to be bought and sold and a strong-willed woman who knows how to get her own way. She insists on entering a three-way marriage with Ben and Pardner yet succumbs to conventionality by the end of the film. Sally Bowles is an even more ambiguous character, inhabiting a liminal state for much of the film. These later films especially refuse to take a side, instead developing sometimes contradictory characters and situations.

As the examples above reveal, films discussed make various issues both more *and* less acute in the move to Hollywood. This tension is key to my study of adaptation and how these

[2]Richard Dyer, "The Colour of Entertainment," in *Musicals: Hollywood and Beyond*, ed. Bill Marshall and Robynn Stilwell (Exeter, England: Intellect, 2000), 23-30.

films reflect their historical moment. Fidelity in part dictates how pointed the relationship to social context becomes in the adaptation. For example, *West Side Story* and *The Music Man* represent the two most faithful adaptations in my chosen case studies. Yet *West Side Story* complicates the marginalization of women in the stage version through casting and characterization. Proven star Natalie Wood brings more to the role of Maria while the agency in Moreno's Anita flouts the notion of female subservience. The depiction of a white small-town Middle America that espouses wholesome values and privileges the nuclear family is inherent in both version of *The Music Man*. At the same time, the film opens up possibilities for reaching more of the population depicted in the musical. Indeed, economics may have much to do with how these films relate to (or not) certain issues. The attempt to draw in a larger portion of the population may account for a hesitance to directly address divisive issues.

While the culture wars receive a prominent place in my analysis, other factors of course play a role in the decade and film industry. For example, a historical shift from small-town American life that privileges hard work and family to increased education and urbanization is also going on during this time. And the impact of the loss of a post-WWII idea of the "American dream" cannot be discounted. The move away from industrial America provoked a crisis and for some, a sense of nostalgia related to yet separate from the culture wars. Throughout this dissertation, I identify trends and movements that intersect specifically with my seven case studies. The period from 1960-75 is a complex one that encompasses perspectives, events, and changes outside the scope of this project.

The concept of intertextuality and the relationship between various adaptations and their sources become key. As Mireia Aragay and Gemma López define it, adaptation involves "the

mutual inf(l)ection between 'source' and adaptation(s)."[3] As so many musicals are, most of the musicals that I discuss are in fact adaptations of adaptations. *West Side Story* is a retelling of *Romeo and Juliet*, one of the most famous tragic love stories in the Western canon; *The Sound of Music* takes a memoir and German films as its sources; *Camelot* is based on T.H. White's version of an old legend; and *Cabaret* draws from Isherwood's stories from the 1930s and van Druten's play version. Not only do all the sources provide the basis for the musical adaptation but the later incarnations go on to "inf(l)ect" the earlier versions – both the original sources and the stage versions of the musicals.

As mentioned in several chapter conclusions, the films discussed here and stage productions often have a reciprocal relationship. *The Sound of Music, Cabaret,* and even *Camelot* have had revivals that use elements from the film versions rather than simply the original stage version. In some cases, *The Sound of Music* especially, the film has become so iconic that replacing "Ordinary Couple" with "Something Good" for instance might seem perfectly natural and certainly caters to audience expectations. *Camelot* does not even remotely hold the same status as *The Sound of Music* yet Richard Harris continued to play King Arthur on stage for years after making the film. Through his involvement, those touring versions took on more of the character of the film. Fascinating and complex, the ways in which film versions influence subsequent stage productions and the implications of this relationship deserves further study.

Another layer of adaptation that I have only mentioned in passing involves television. *The Music Man*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, and just recently as of this writing *The Sound of Music* have had

[3]Mireia Aragay and Gemma López, "Inf(l)ecting *Pride and Prejudice*: Dialogism, Intertextuality and Adaptation" in *Books in Motion: Adaptation, Intertextuality, Authorship*, ed. Mireia Aragay (New York: Rodopi, 2006), 201.

TV treatment. As mentioned in their chapter, *The Wonderful World of Disney* produced both *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie*. These productions had relatively high production values and featured the well-known singers and/or stage and television actors Matthew Broderick, Kristin Chenoweth, Jason Alexander, and Vanessa Williams. Furthermore, both adapted the stage version rather than the film – particularly important in the case of the highly altered *Bye Bye Birdie*. NBC's recent live broadcast of *The Sound of Music* did something different. Filmed live in a vast warehouse with a multitude of detailed sets, the musical starred country singer Carrie Underwood. Though beyond my scope, a few elements deserve attention. While *The Wonderful World of Disney*'s adaptations had more of a "made-for-television" feel visually and in terms of performance, *The Sound of Music* felt like a filmed stage production. This was particularly noticeable in the style of acting, rife with the type of projection and exaggeration needed on a stage but odd on TV. Furthermore, the TV adaptation ostensibly used the original stage production as its source. However, the producers still chose to use "Something Good" rather than "Ordinary Couple" for the love duet between the Captain and Maria. All of these productions add something to the story of these musicals and adaptation and warrant further study.

I also consider the effects of casting, focusing on so-called star text, or the associations a performer brings to the table via their career trajectory or even personal life. Another aspect of cast is the notion of "haunting" or "ghosting." Drawing on Marvin Carlson's *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine*, this idea refers in part to the ways in which an original production continues to resonate.[4] As John Staniunas states, "Playhouses contain the memory – the echoes, if you will – of performances that once took place in them. Play scripts are permanently marked by prior interpretations. And the roles actors take on are 'ghosted' by the

[4]Marvin Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

performances of actors who came before them."[5] When a show is committed to screen, the role becomes doubly haunted. Indeed, it is difficult to think about Harold Hill without conjuring Robert Preston or Maria without Julie Andrews. The effects of haunting are profound and varied as these musicals continue to live on in cultural memory to different degrees.

Although beyond the scope of this work, the transnational context must be acknowledged. My dissertation deals with these musicals in a specifically United States context. For the Midwest-focused *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie*, the transfer from regional to national is representative of their popularity. However, many film musicals of this period have had success internationally. Among my case studies, *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music* have been the most popular outside of the United States. In her book on *West Side Story*, Elizabeth A. Wells touches on the film's reception in other countries.[6] Similarly some work on *The Sound of Music* addresses its international popularity.[7] International reception and its effects is another area worthy of more study.

Finally, my dissertation analyzes adaptation in terms of products as far as it goes. I focus on the "fixed" object of the film, a product which can be viewed again and again. While in dealing with the stage productions to some extent I grapple with the ephemerality of theater, my work looks into the identifiable changes that occur in the move from stage to screen. However, working in adaptation raises a number of questions regarding the *process* of adaptation. In my archival work on *West Side Story* in 2010, I began to gain an understanding of part of the process, namely the collaboration between Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal and the level of

[5]John Staniunas, "Haunted Characters: Harold and Marian: Directing *The Music Man*," *Studies in Musical Theatre* 3: 1, 43.

[6]Elizabeth A. Wells, *West Side Story: Cultural Perspectives on an American Musical* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2011), 217-48.

[7]See Max Wilk, *The Making of The Sound of Music* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 82-3.

Bernstein's involvement in their work. I believe that extensive archival work can provide a missing piece to this puzzle and begin to get at intentions and the process that led to the final film. I consider this type of work to be the next step for studying the musicals considered here and their adaptation to film.

APPENDIX A

Basic Film Information and Plot Synopses

West Side Story (1961):

Broadway production opened in 1957; Music by Leonard Bernstein, Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, Book by Arthur Laurents; Screenplay by Ernest Lehman; Directed by Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins; Orchestrated by Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal; Starring Natalie Wood as Maria, Rita Moreno as Anita, Richard Beymer as Tony, Russ Tamblyn as Riff, and George Chakiris as Bernardo

Plot Synopsis: Based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the musical traces the doomed relationship between the star-crossed lovers Tony and Maria. The film opens with the Prologue, which introduces the self-styled white American gang the Jets and their newly arrived rival gang the Puerto Rican Sharks. Within the first ten minutes, territorial tensions escalate and the Jets decide to issue a challenge to the Sharks at that evening's dance. Jet leader Riff approaches co-leader and best friend Tony to support the gang at the dance. After reluctantly agreeing, Tony reveals in "Something's Coming" that he believes there is more out there. Meanwhile, newly-arrived Maria, sister of Shark leader Bernardo, prepares for her first dance with her friend and confidante Anita. At the dance, Tony and Maria meet and fall in love-at-first-sight and the two gangs agree to a war council. Tony follows Maria to her home and the couple declares their love in "Tonight." Before the war council, Anita and her boyfriend Bernard argue about the benefits and problems of living in "America" while the Jets bemoan their perceived delinquency. The gangs then decide to meet, and at Tony's urging, engage in a fist fight. The next evening Maria naively asks Tony to stop the fight altogether before they enact a mock wedding. At the rumble, the fighting escalates from fist fight to knife fight. Bernardo kills Riff. In a fit of anger and grief, Tony kills Bernardo. Maria ultimately forgives Tony and they plan to run away together. Maria convinces an angry Anita to accept her love for Tony. When Anita goes to tell Tony to wait for Maria, the Jets attempt to rape her, stopped only by kind-hearted Doc. Anita reports that Maria is dead in retaliation. When Tony finds out, he tries to find Shark member Chino so that he can shoot him also. Maria, very much alive, finds Tony. However, Chino succeeds in shooting Tony before they can reunite. Maria threatens to shoot members of both gangs and kill herself in her grief over Tony and the others' deaths. She lives and at least temporarily, brings the gangs together.

The Music Man (1962):

Broadway production opened in 1957; Music, lyrics, and book by Meredith Willson; Screenplay by Marion Hargrove; Directed by Morton Da Costa; Orchestrated by Frank Comstock, Ray Heindorf, and Gus Levene; Starring Robert Preston as Harold Hill, Shirley Jones as Marian Paroo, Buddy Hackett as Marcellus Washburn, Hermione Gingold as Eulalie Mackechnie Shinn, and Ron Howard as Winthrop Paroo.

Plot Synopsis: The musical opens as traveling salesman and conman Harold Hill is run out of a town. Hill purports to sell boys bands, complete with instruments and uniforms, with the promise of teaching the kids how to play despite having no musical knowledge. On the train, other salesman complain about the state of the business and mention Hill as giving them a bad name. Hill exits at the next stop, which happens to be the notoriously stubborn town of River City, Iowa. He luckily runs into an old associate, Marcellus Washburn, who gives him information about the townspeople. After discovering that a pool table has recently been delivered to the town, Hill uses the new arrival to stir the parents of River City into a frenzied worry about their children's well-being. While Mayor Shinn and his associates, the members of the school board, are wary, they fall for the charming conman's machinations. Hill turns the school board into a barbershop quartet as a means of eluding their prying questions. During the Fourth of July celebrations, Hill weaves a spell of patriotism and stirs the imagination of the townspeople. The only citizen who sees through Hill is the lonely but straight-laced town librarian and piano teacher Marian Paroo. Marian constantly resists Hill's advances until she sees the positive impact that he has had on her shy, troubled little brother Winthrop. Marian then begins to protect and fall for the scoundrel Hill even as he unwittingly falls in love with her. Another traveling salesman comes to warn the town of Hill's deception, but before he can leave, Hill realizes that he loves Marian and stays. The town gets ready to "tar and feather" Hill, but Marian convinces them to let Hill conduct the band, which he has taught using his bogus "think system." The children play a terrible version of "Minuet in G." And the film ends triumphantly as everyone transforms into a professional looking and sounding marching band that parades through town.

Bye Bye Birdie (1963):

Stage production opened in 1960; Music by Charles Strouse, Lyrics by Lee Adams, Book by Michael Stewart; Screenplay by Irving Brecher; Directed by George Sidney; Starring Dick Van Dyke as Albert Peterson, Janet Leigh as Rosie DeLeon, Ann-Margret as Kim McAfee, Paul Lynde as Harry McAfee, and Bobby Rydell as Hugo Peabody.

Plot Synopsis: Set in 1958, the film focuses on rock 'n' roll star Conrad Birdie being drafted into the army. Struggling songwriter Albert laments the timing of the draft as Birdie, a friend, was planning on singing one of his songs in his next movie. Albert truly wants to be a biochemist but has remained a songwriter to please his mother. His secretary and girlfriend comes up with a scheme to make money before Birdie is drafted by getting a spot on *The Ed Sullivan Show* – the gimmick is that Conrad will sing a song by Albert and kiss a normal, teenage girl goodbye. Meanwhile, the chosen girl, Kim McAfee, has just gotten pinned by her boyfriend Hugo. Conrad comes to Kim's town of Sweet Apple, Ohio, causing all the women to swoon and the men to get angry. Mr. McAfee, after seeing Conrad, refuses to let Kim appear on TV until Rosie and Albert promise him a brief appearance on the show. As preparations for the big kiss commence, Hugo becomes jealous. At the same time, Rosie becomes angry with Albert for being a mama's boy. As the two couples fight, the television spot is jeopardized by a lengthy dance by the Moscow ballet. Rosie and Albert make up after he saves her from a compromising situation, and the pair hatch a plan to get Albert's song back on-air. Albert has been developing a chemical called "Speed Up," which Rosie gives to the Russian ballet conductor. He then proceeds to ruin the

ballet by taking the tempo too fast while live on TV. Conrad's song get reinstated, but a jealous Hugo ruins the broadcast by punching Conrad. Nevertheless, the film ends happily as the teens get back together, Albert and Rosie get engaged, and Albert goes into business with Mr. McAfee for his "Speed Up" formula.

The Sound of Music (1965):

Broadway production opened in 1959; Music by Richard Rodgers, Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, Book by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse; Screenplay by Ernest Lehman; Directed by Robert Wise; Starring Julie Andrews as Maria, Christopher Plummer as Captain Georg von Trapp, Eleanor Parker as Baroness Elsa Schraeder, Richard Haydn as Max Detweiler, and Charmian Carr as Liesl von Trapp.

Plot Synopsis: The film opens with a view of postulant Maria singing carefree on an Austrian mountaintop. Back at the Abbey, Maria's absence is noticed and the nuns engage in a debate about her suitability for life with them. The Mother Abbess sends Maria to work as a governess for the seven children of a very strict retired naval captain. Upon arriving, the children at first pull pranks on the unsuspecting governess in order to gain the attention of their neglectful father. Maria soon, however, wins them over. In the Captain's absence, Maria teaches the von Trapp children to play and sing. When the Captain returns from a trip to Vienna with Baroness Schraeder and friend Max, he becomes displeased with the children's lack of discipline and fires Maria. However, he quickly changes his mind when his singing children melt his heart. The newly happy family plan a party in honor of the Baroness. At the party, both the Nazi threat and Maria's feelings for the Captain become apparent. Afraid of being in love, Maria leaves. In her absence, the children are forlorn, and the Captain and Baroness plan to get married. In the Abbey, the Mother Abbess convinces Maria that she cannot run away from her life, which causes the young postulant to return to the von Trapps. Once Maria returns, the Captain and the Baroness break off their engagement, and the Captain, realizing his feelings, proposes to Maria. The couple get married. During their honeymoon, the Anschluss occurs. Upon returning home, the Captain is summoned by the Third Reich to take up his post in the navy. The von Trapps, however, use a music festival as cover to escape. They hide in the Abbey before leaving Autria on foot over the mountains for Switzerland.

Camelot (1967)*:*

Broadway production opened in 1960; Music by Frederick Loewe, Book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner; Screenplay by Lerner; Directed by Joshua Logan; Music supervised by Alfred Newman; Orchestrated by Jack Hayes, Pete King, Leo Shuken, Gus Levene, and Albert Sendry; Starring Vanessa Redgrave as Guenevere, Richard Harris as King Arthur, and Franco Nero as Lancelot du Lac

Plot Synopsis: On the eve of battle, King Arthur of England sadly reminisces about the events that led to war. The flashback begins with the arrival of Guenevere in Camelot. Guenevere runs away from her entourage and finds the kindly Arthur, whom she does not yet know is her betrothed. Arthur extolls the virtues of Camelot in order to persuade Guenevere into staying. She eventually discovers that her companion is the king and marries him. After their wedding, the timeline jumps forward several years. With the help of Guenevere, Arthur devises and implements a system based on "Might for Right," peaceful knights, and a Round Table. In France, Lancelot du Lac hears of the Round Table and travels to England in order to join. While Arthur strikes up an immediate friendship with Lancelot, Guenevere exhibits distaste for the young Frenchman and champions others in an upcoming joust. Lancelot, however, wins every joust and even mortally wounds another man. In a miracle, Lancelot brings his opponent back to life. It is after this miracle that Guenevere and Lancelot discover their feelings for one another. Meanwhile, an oblivious Arthur stages an elaborate knighting ceremony for his friend. Before the ceremony, the king realizes the feelings between his wife and Lancelot but resolves to be forgiving. Several years later, the affair between Sir Lancelot and the queen is an open secret. Arthur's illegitimate son, Mordred, comes to Camelot, intent on destroying his father's utopian kingdom through his adulterous loved ones. He succeeds, but Lancelot escapes when he is caught with Guenevere and returns to rescue her during her execution for treason. The film ends on the same night that it begins. Guenevere and Lancelot ask for Arthur's forgiveness as the two groups ready for battle. Arthur despairs of his dream until a young boy arrives and vows to tell the story of Camelot.

Paint Your Wagon (1969):

Broadway production opened in 1951; Music by Frederick Loewe, Book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner; Screenplay by Lerner and Paddy Chayefsky; Directed by Joshua Logan; Additional songs by André Previn; Orchestrated by Willard Jones; Starring Clint Eastwood as Pardner and Lee Marvin as Ben Rumson

Plot Synopsis: As hundreds of people travel west to California, one wagon loses control and tips over. Ben Rumson is able to save one man but his brother dies. During the funeral, Rumson notices gold and stakes the claim for him and the man he saved, his "Pardner." A town grows around the gold veins as Ben and Pardner work and become friends. A Mormon comes to town with his two wives and sells one of them, Elizabeth. Excited by the sight of a woman, a drunk Ben buys Elizabeth at auction and marries her. She agrees to be a good wife if Ben will give her his name and build her a house. Ben becomes wildly jealous as his wife is the only woman in town so Pardner suggests that the town acquire some prostitutes. When Ben leads an expedition to steal the prostitutes, Elizabeth and Pardner fall in love. After some confusion, the two men discover that Elizabeth loves both of them and eventually agree to both be married to Elizabeth. Sometime later, the town has grown into a large western city with several successful saloons and bordellos. However, winter is coming, and the men will not be able to mine gold. When some travelers get caught in a snow storm, Elizabeth takes them in. Embarrassed, she only admits to having one husband – Pardner. Meanwhile, Ben, Pardner, and some other miners begin to dig tunnels to catch fallen gold dust from the town's establishments in order to survive the winter.

The tunnels ultimately collapse and destroy the city. Having fallen out with Pardner and Elizabeth, Ben leaves. He says goodbye to Pardner, whose name is revealed to be Sylvester Newel. Pardner returns to Elizabeth now her sole husband. Ben leaves with hundreds more people, once again looking for adventure.

Cabaret (1972):

Broadway production opened in 1966; Music by John Kander, Lyrics by Fredd Ebb, Book by Joe Masteroff; Screenplay by Jay Presson Allen; Directed by Bob Fosse; Starring Liza Minnelli as Sally Bowles, Michael York as Brian Roberts, Joel Grey as the Emcee, and Helmut Griem as Maximillian von Heune.

Plot Synopsis: The film opens in the tawdry Kit Kat Klub in Berlin, Germany. The Master of Cermonies welcomes the audience and sets the tone for the film. As he sings, we see the arrival of British Ph.D. student Brian Roberts. Brian goes to a boarding house where he meets brash American Sally Bowles, who works at the Kit Kat Klub. Sally introduces Brian to her friend Fritz Wendel, an opportunist who will take English lessons with Brian. Sally and Brian strike up a close friendship. At first, Brian refuses enter into a sexual relationship with Sally because he admits to not sleeping with girls. Meanwhile, Fritz falls in love with another of Brian's pupils, a wealthy Jewish girl named Natalia Landauer. When Sally drops her usual bravado when stood up by her father, Brian becomes attracted to her and the two begin a romantic relationship. Sally, however, meets the wealthy Baron Maximillian von Heune. The Baron shows interest in both Sally and Brian, and – despite Brian's reluctance – the three start to spend a lot of time together. At the same time, the rise of the Nazi party becomes clear through shots of their increasing numbers and effects and the commentary from the Kit Kat Klub musical numbers. Fritz admits to Natalia that he is also Jewish, and she stops her previous resistance and accepts his marriage proposal. After Max ditches Sally and Brian once the political situation becomes too hot, the pair admit to having both slept with him. Later, Sally tells Brian that she is pregnant but does not know whether he or Max is the father. Brian accepts this and proposes. Their plans fall through, however, when Sally gets an abortion without consulting Brian. He leaves Berlin just in time, leaving Sally at the Kit Kat Klub and the newly married Jewish couple to their fates at the beginning of the Third Reich.

APPENDIX B

Stage to Screen Song Comparison

West Side Story:

Stage:	Screen:
Act 1	
	Prologue
Prologue	Jet Song
Jet Song	Something's Coming
Something's Coming	Dance at the Gym Sequence
Dance at the Gym Sequence	Maria
Maria	America
Balcony Scene (Tonight Duet)	Balcony Scene (Tonight Duet)
America	Gee, Officer Krupke
Cool	I Feel Pretty
One Hand, One Heart	One Hand, One Heart
Tonight ensemble	Tonight Ensemble
Rumble	Rumble
Act 2	Intermission
I Feel Pretty	Somewhere Duet
Somewhere Ballet Sequence	Cool
Gee, Officer Krupke	A Boy Like That/I Have a Love
A Boy Like That/I Have a Love	Finale
Finale	

The Music Man:

Stage:	Screen:
Act 1	
Rock Island	Rock Island
Iowa Stubbord	Iowa Stubborn
(Ya Got) Trouble	(Ya Got) Trouble
Piano Lesson	Piano Lesson
Goodnight, My Someone	Goodnight, My Someone
Seventy-six Trombones	Seventy-six Trombones
Sincere	Sincere
The Sadder But Wiser Girl	Pickalittle
Pickalittle	Goodnight Ladies
Goodnight Ladies	The Sadder But Wiser Girl
Marian the Librarian	Marian the Librarian
My White Knight	Gary, Indiana

The Wells Fargo Wagon Act 2 It's You Shipoopi Pickalittle (reprise) Lida Rose Will I Ever Tell You? Gary Indiana It's You (reprise) Till There Was You Seventy-six Trombones (reprise) Goodnight My Someone (reprise) Till There Was You (reprise) Finale	Being In Love The Wells Fargo Wagon Lida Rose Will I Ever Tell You? Gary, Indiana (reprise) Shipoopi Till There Was You It's You Seventy-six Trombones (reprise) Goodnight, My Someone (reprise) Till There Was You (reprise) Finale

Bye Bye Birdie:

Stage:	Screen:
Act 1: An English Teacher The Telephone Hour How Lovely to Be a Woman We Love You, Conrad! Put On a Happy Face Normal American Boy One Boy One Boy (reprise) Honestly Sincere Hymn for a Sunday Evening Ballet: How to Kill a Man One Last Kiss Act 2: What Did I Ever See In Him? A Lot of Livin' To Do Kids Baby, Talk to Me Shriner's Ballet Kids (reprise) Spanish Rose Rosie	Bye Bye Birdie We Love You, Conrad! The Telephone Hour How Lovely to Be a Woman We Love You, Conrad/We Hate You, Conrad! Honestly Sincere Hymn for a Sunday Evening One Boy One Boy (reprise) Put On a Happy Face Kids One Last Kiss A Lot of Livin' To Do Shriner's Ballet One Last Kiss Rosie

The Sound of Music:

Stage:	Screen:
Act 1	
	The Sound of Music
Praeludium	Opening Credits
The Sound of Music	Praeludium
Maria	Maria
My Favorite Things	I Have Confidence
Do-Re-Mi	You Are Sixteen
You Are Sixteen	My Favorite Things
The Lonely Goatherd	Do-Re-Mi
How Can Love Survive?	The Sound of Music (reprise)
The Sound of Music (reprise)	The Lonely Goatherd
So, Long Farewell	Edelweiss
Climb Every Mountain	So Long, Farewell
Act 2	Intermission
Children reprise: Goatherd; Sound of Music; Favorite Things	Climb Every Mountain Children reprise: Sound of Music; Favorite Things
No Way to Stop It	Something Good
Ordinary Couple	Wedding Processional
Wedding Processional	You Are Sixteen (reprise)
You Are Sixteen (reprise)	Do-Re-Mi (reprise)
Do-Re-Mi (reprise)	Edelweiss (reprise)
Edelweiss	So Long Farewell (reprise)
So Long Farewell (reprise)	Climb Every Mountain (reprise)
Climb Every Mountain (reprise)	

Camelot:

Stage:	Screen:
Act 1	Act 1
I Wonder What the King Is Doing Tonight?	I Wonder What the King Is Doing Tonight?
The Simple Joys of Maidenhood	The Simple Joys of Maidenhood
Camelot	Camelot
Follow Me	C'est moi
C'est moi	The Lusty Month of May
The Lusty Month of May	Then You May Take Me to the Fair
Then You May Take Me to the Fair	How to Handle a Woman
How to Handle a Woman	
The Jousts	
Before I Gaze at You Again	

Act 2 If Ever I Would Leave You The Seven Deadly Virtues What Do the Simple Folk Do? The Persuasion Fie on Goodness I Loved You in Silence "Guenevere Camelot" (reprise)	Act 2 If Ever I Would Leave You What Do the Simple Folk Do? Follow Me I Loved You in Silence Guenevere Camelot (reprise)

Paint Your Wagon:

Stage:	Screen:
Act 1 I'm On My Way Rumson What's Goin' On Here? I Talk to the Trees They Call the Wind the Maria I Still See Elisa How Can I Wait? Trio Rumson (reprise) In Between Whoop-Ti-Ay How Can I Wait? (reprise) Carino Mio There's a Coach Comin' In Finaletto	Act 1 I'm On My Way (opening credits) I'm On My Way (choral reprise) I Still See Elisa The First Thing You Know Hand Me Down That Can O' Beans They Call the Wind Maria Whoop-Ti-Ay A Million Miles Away Behind the Door I Talk to the Trees There's a Coach Comin' In
Act 2 Hand Me Down That Can O' Beans Rope Dance Can-Can Another Autumn Movin' I'm On My Way (reprise) All For Him Wand'rin' Star I Talk to the Trees (reprise)	Act 2 Here It Is The Best Things in Life Are Dirty Wand'rin' Star Gold Fever Here It Is (reprise) I'm On My Way (reprise)

Cabaret:

Stage:	Screen:
Act 1 Wilkommen So What? Don't Tell Mama Telephone Song Perfectly Marvelous Two Ladies It Couldn't Please Me More Tomorrow Belongs to Me Why Should I Wake Up? The Money Song Married Meeskite Tomorrow Belongs to Me (reprise) Act 2: If You Could See Her Married (reprise) If You Could See Her (reprise) What Would You Do? Cabaret Finale	Wilkommen Mein Herr Maybe This Time Money, Money Two Ladies Tomorrow Belongs to Me Tiller Girls If You Could See Her Cabaret Finale

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